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THE SILVER ISLAND OF THE CHIPPEWA

"INDIAN" STORIES WITH HISTORICAL BASES

By D. LANGE

12mo. Cloth Illustrated

ON THE TRAIL OF THE SIOUX

THE SILVER ISLAND OF THE CHIPPEWA

LOST IN THE FUR COUNTRY

IN THE GREAT WILD NORTH

THE LURE OF THE BLACK HILLS

THE LURE OF THE MISSISSIPPI

THE SILVER CACHE OF THE PAWNEES

THE SHAWNEE'S WARNING

THE THREAT OF SITTING BULL

THE RAID OF THE OTTAWA

THE MOHAWK RANGER

THE IROQUOIS SCOUT

THE SIOUX RUNNER

THE GOLD ROCK OF THE CHIPPEWA

THE BOAST OF THE SEMINOLE

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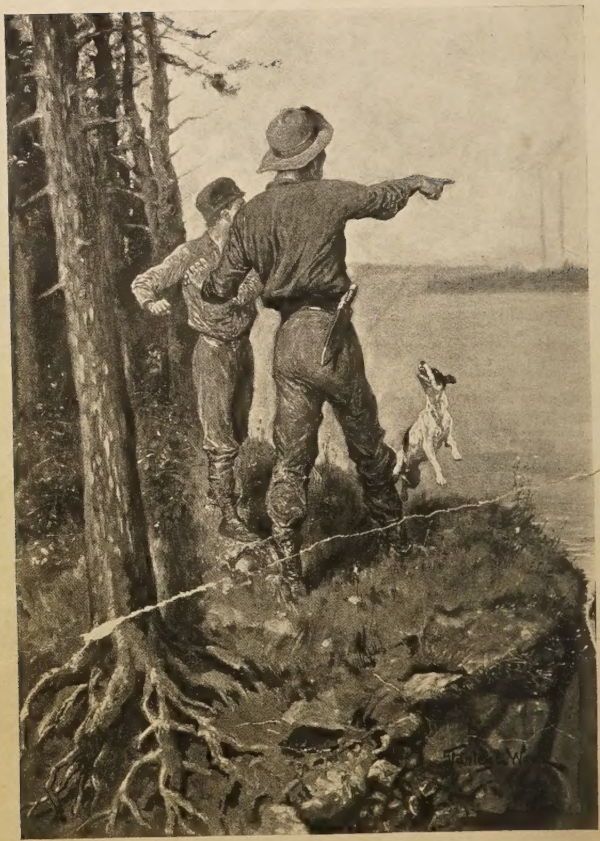

"That smoke tells the message plainly enough," observed Dan.—*Page 161.*

THE SILVER ISLAND OF THE CHIPPEWA

BY

D. LANGE

AUTHOR OF "ON THE TRAIL OF THE SIOUX"

ILLUSTRATED BY STANLEY L. WOOD

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It wasn't a fortress at all, he said. It was a sort of ruin now, but when he first trapped bear on the North Shore and lynx on Isle Royale, it was a fabulously rich silver mine. So rich was the ore that they packed it in sacks and barrels, when they shipped it to Detroit.

On that trip, the romance of the North, of Lake Superior, the Great Inland Sea, and of wild rock-bound and rock-ribbed Isle Royale, the great isle of Minong of the Chippewas, laid hold of me. I camped in their little cabins with fishermen and trappers, I stalked moose, deer, and bear with camera and field-glass, climbed to the nest of the great white-headed eagle, visited some of the Chippewa Indians and pitched my tent among the screaming sea gulls on the long low ridges of the Siskiwit Islands.

And when both boys and girls, and many adults, received kindly "On the Trail of the Sioux," a story of the prairies, I ventured to tell a tale playing on the lakes, streams, and islands, and in the forests of the Chip-

pewas, who, in the days gone by, fought many a battle with their hereditary enemies, the Sioux, but did not join the Sioux in their desperate struggles against the Whites.

Thus grew the story of "The Silver Island of the Chippewa."

DIETRICH LANGE.

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THE SILVER ISLAND
OF THE CHIPPEWA

THE SILVER ISLAND OF THE CHIPPEWA

CHAPTER I

THE CHIPPEWA'S MESSAGE

WINNIBOSHEE, the Chippewa Indian, had made a remarkably fast trip in his canoe from Grand Portage on Lake Superior to Fort Frances, Ontario.

He carried an important letter addressed to John McCulloch, Indian Trader at Fort Frances, and a friend of McCulloch at Grand Portage had promised the Indian a new gun if he delivered the letter in less than a week's time. Winniboshee, in order to provide his family with enough moose meat and venison, needed a new gun very much, so he paddled eighteen hours a day and made the trip in six days.

McCulloch, although naturally cool and deliberate in his actions, quickly took the letter into a little back room of his log house. His fingers trembled as he broke the red seal, and his voice was a little unsteady as he read it to his wife and oldest son, Dan.

"Dear Mr. McCulloch," it ran. "On March 20th we paid to Alexander Sellsby your credit of fifteen hundred dollars ($1500) as directed in your order of January 5th, 1865. We understand that Mr. Sellsby and the Chippewa, Hamigeesek, who accompanied him, were to close some mining deal for you at Montreal. We could not doubt the genuineness of the order, but had we been able to reach you, we should have advised you against such a highly speculative venture.

"Your friends, Sellsby and Hamigeesek, took passage on the steamer *Mackinac,* for Montreal on May 3d, and on May 5 the boat foundered with all on board in a violent storm on Lake Erie.

"We appreciate that this news of the death

of your friends must come as a hard blow to you. The financial loss also is not inconsiderable to a beginner in the Indian trade, and therefore you may draw on us to the extent of five hundred dollars ($500).

"Hoping that you and your family are well, we remain,

"Cordially yours,

"JOHN L. STETSON & Co.

"Bankers.

"Detroit, Michigan,
"May 8th, 1865."

"Now we're done for," muttered Mr. McCulloch, as he stared blankly at the rough logs of the floor and let the letter fall from his trembling hands.

"Oh, come, Father, we're not done for!" exclaimed Dan, a wiry lad of nineteen, as he sprang up from his rough log stool and stood up tall and straight, his blond hair almost touching the low ceiling.

"We are not done for!" he repeated. "If Silver Island exists, I'll find it; and if it's

half as rich as Hamigeesek claimed it is, we'll come out all right. Don't cry, Mother; if Silver Island is within a thousand miles of here, I'll find it!"

Then the three sat in silence, until McCulloch went to take a meal of hominy bread and bacon to Winniboshee.

"I was always opposed to this wild scheme," remarked Dan's mother, as the tears stole out of her calm gray eyes, "but you and Father would not listen to me. You aren't even sure that the ore which Hamigeesek left here contains any silver. It may be lead or tin or some other worthless metal. I never quite trusted either Sellsby or Hamigeesek."

"What's that you say, Mother?" asked McCulloch as he entered the room again. "Sellsby and Hamigeesek never told a lie and Dan and I know silver from lead, although we are not miners or chemists. To-night, after we are safe from intruders, we'll all go to Wolf Hollow and convince you that that piece of ore is full of real silver."

That June day seemed endless to the whole

McCulloch family. Again and again Dan examined the piece of ore, and every time he became more firmly convinced that the white streaks and lumps in it were nothing else than pure silver.

But Dan's small brother, Harry, was the most excited of all and made no attempt to conceal his excitement, and hardly left Dan for half an hour at a time.

"Dan," he begged, "now, Dan, you aren't going to hunt up that Silver Island and leave me here all alone with sister Margaret? If you do, I'll sure run away back to Detroit. I can't do a thing here but hang around this old log house.

"Mother won't let me go and play with the Indian kids; she won't let me go fishing or swimming alone. I can't do a thing but work in the garden and quarrel with sister. And every time I make her cry Mother boxes my ears or asks Father to straighten me out. Oh, I wish I was back in Detroit!"

"Oh, kid, dry up, dry up!" at last Dan broke in good naturedly. "You'd be dead

long ago if Mother didn't watch you. Didn't you fall into the river only last week?"

"Yes, and didn't I get out again, too?" retorted Harry, vexed at the indifference of his big brother. "How am I ever going to learn to swim, if I can never go to the river? You and Father and Mother always say: 'Don't go near the river, don't go fishing; you're too small to set traps. Play with Margaret and work in your garden.'

"If you go away and leave me, I'll run after you," he screamed as he broke out crying; "or I'll,—I'll—run—run—away to—to Detroit. You, you'll see, if I—don't!" And with that he ran down the trail to a secluded spot where he frequently hid himself when his excitable temper had been wrought up to an uncomfortable degree.

"Queer kid," muttered Dan, as he looked after him. "Very much like myself when I was eleven. He would take it very hard if I went away and left him. And it is really pretty lonesome here for a youngster. Wonder if I could take him along? He would be

lots of company. But I'm afraid Mother wouldn't allow it."

At last evening drew near. Winniboshee had long ago finished his meal of boiled bacon, bread and lettuce. One whole loaf of bread he had eaten and the second loaf he had carried away under his blanket, as it was the custom of Indians to do with anything left over from a meal.

The sky began to be tinted orange behind the pines, numerous whitethroats whistled on the trees around the clearing, and the weird and dreamy evening song of several hermit thrushes rang out from the thickets of spruce, balsam, and birch a few rods away.

Quietly the McCulloch family walked along the trail northward to Wolf Hollow. Only Harry and his fox terrier, Waggles, could not suppress their excitement. They ran ahead on the trail, scampered about now on this side and now on that, until Dan called to them sharply: "Cut out your capers, kid. Haven't I told you lots of times that the woods have ears and eyes?"

"Yes," spoke up the boys' father, "Harry, stop your racket with the pup. It's harder to keep a secret in these woods than it is to keep one's business quiet in a big town. Some of these Indians and half-breeds seem to be able to smell news. Fall in behind with that frisky pup of yours!"

Arrived at the hollow, Dan laid the ore on a stump, around which he built a fire, and for half an hour the boys and their father fed the blaze until it lighted up the little hollow with the reddish glare of old pine knots, and made the tall trunks of pines and the white-barked poplars and birches stand out in sharp contrast, like white, spooky silhouettes against a dark background.

Then they let the fire burn low, and with a stick Dan pulled out the ore. He pushed it over on a rock and hammered it with the head of his ax until most of the rock, cracked and softened by the fire, fell away from the metal. As soon as the battered piece had cooled off, he took it up.

"There," he said to his parents; "it's

surely not iron or copper, and it isn't lead or tin or some other worthless stuff. If it were, this fire would have melted it. It's got the white bright shine of silver and it beats up like silver. It's silver and nothing else, though I admit that this beating and hammering is a pretty crude test. There's more of it where this came from and I want to go and find it!"

"True enough," replied Dan's father in a low voice. "I think it's silver all right. Everybody thinks there's gold and silver in the rocks around Lake Superior, and I know that Sellsby and Hamigeesek didn't lie to me. But how can you ever hope to find the Island? Hamigeesek was the only one who knew, and he and poor Sellsby lie dead on the bottom of Lake Erie."

"Now look, Father," broke in Dan earnestly. "I know enough to try. Hamigeesek found the Island on a trip to Isle Royale in Lake Superior. I know in a general way the route he must have taken. He said the Island was very small, just a bare rock only five

times as long as a canoe, had no trees or bushes on it, and you could see the silver shine in the water like stars.

"I don't know whether the Island is in Rainy Lake or in some other lake along the route, or in Lake Superior. I don't believe it's far from shore nor far from Isle Royale if it is in Lake Superior, because the Indians seldom go far from land in their canoes. My plan is to start at once along the route to Isle Royale. I may pick up some more information as I go along. Hamigeesek's good friend, Amigoosheb, generally has his camp at the head of the Pigeon River, near the Isle Royale route, and I wouldn't be surprised if Hamigeesek had visited him and told him something about the location of Silver Island."

"If Dan goes hunting for that island I'm going along," piped out Harry with a loud shrill voice. "There's nothing here for me to do and Margaret can have my garden, and—"

"Harry," broke in Mr. McCulloch ear-

nestly, "if you start making a noise here, I'll baste you well with a birch switch. You've been an unbearable youngster all day!"

Harry knew that his father meant it and felt a little ashamed of his actions during the day; but as the family walked home in silence, he made up his mind to beg Dan to take him along and have Dan help him get his father's and mother's consent.

Harry's dog, Waggles, had run ahead, and when he was about half-way to the house, he began to bark savagely and ran something into the timber.

"I wonder what that pup is after now? He makes enough noise to awake the whole woods," remarked Dan.

"I bet it's a fisher, Dan," answered Harry. "Don't you know ever since he had a fight with the fisher last winter, he gets mad and barks like crazy when he strikes the trail of one."

"He seems to be right on to something, the way he barks," said McCulloch to Dan, as Harry ran ahead alone. "I just wonder if

that half-breed Le Noir has been nosing around here again? Ever since poor Sellsby and Hamigeesek started for Montreal, that fellow has been trying to find out something about their trip. I wonder if he has any inkling about the discovery Hamigeesek made?''

CHAPTER II

THE START

BEFORE breakfast next morning Harry opened his campaign with his mother and was met by a flat refusal to his ardent prayer. But this did not discourage Harry at all, because Mother had many times first refused a thing and later had granted it. With his most persuasive arguments he went after his big brother.

"Dan," he begged, "if you let me go along hunting for that Silver Island, I'll never be kiddish again, honest Injun, I won't! I won't be lazy and I'll mind you to a dot. Cross my heart, Dan, I will. I'll lug all my own stuff too."

"No, you can't go, kid. You're always hungry or tired or dry. And then you always make such a blooming lot of noise that

you'd scare all the game and make us both starve."

"Oh, come, Dan, I told you I wouldn't be kiddish, and sure as I live I won't. And Waggles must go along too. Wouldn't Waggles and I have a time! We'll guard camp from Indians and bears when you are asleep, and Waggles will catch—"

"Drop it, kid, drop it!" Dan began to laugh aloud. "You and Waggles are just the right kind to fight bears and Indians. You two will make enough racket to scare the fish in the water, and—"

"Dan, sure, I tell you we'll be as quiet as moles and we'll work like beavers."

"Yes, I know both of you. You'll be snoring five minutes after we make camp and Waggles never caught anything bigger than mice and rats."

"He never had a chance. He's mighty brave all right. He can't help being small. Didn't he have a big fight with the fisher?"

"And the fisher would have killed him if I hadn't come along with a club."

"But he showed that he was the right stuff."

"Yes, you and Waggles are both great stuff! Just quit jawing me now; I'll see what I can do for you and that speckled pup of yours."

"Whee! hurrah!" yelled Harry. "Dan, you're a bully fellow. When are we going to start?"

"Run along and get some water for Mother from the spring. We'll start as soon as we can get ready."

Harry had never worked as hard as he did this day. He fetched in water and wood. He hoed his garden as it never had been hoed before, and he even hoed Margaret's garden. It was a bad day for weeds. He told Waggles all about the trip and Waggles looked him straight in the face and wagged his short-haired tail with much excitement, and Harry felt sure Waggles knew what his master was talking about and the boy-master was several times on the point of telling Margaret everything, but he was afraid that she would spoil

his case with Father and Mother before Dan had secured their consent.

When Harry went to bed he started to travel in imagination the whole trail from Fort Frances to Grand Portage, over which the family had come about a year ago, but he fell asleep when he reached the grove of big Norway pines at Five-Mile Camp where they had made the last stop on the long journey.

Dan succeeded in convincing his father and mother that Harry and Waggles should join in the search for Silver Island.

"I should like to have some company on this long trip," he had argued, "and I shall certainly take good care of him and can look after him better than you could at home. He can't go to school here, but he will learn a lot of things on this trip."

Three days later, Dan, Harry, and Waggles took the trail for Grand Portage. The dawn of a June day breaks early in the North Country. It was just past two o'clock when the boys said good-by to their parents and sister. A few whitethroats already

whistled their clear song from the spruce and fir thickets.

"Gee whiz," remarked Harry, "those little Peabody birds don't do much sleeping. One of them was singing last night at ten o'clock just before I fell asleep."

The stars were still twinkling above the dark forest and it was with some difficulty that the travelers followed the trail. Waggles, who was generally very cheerful, frisking about to right and left, and sniffing at all kinds of real and imaginary tracks, trotted soberly behind. The cold wet grass did not invite any frisking about, and he seemed to be depressed in spirits and wondering why any humans should start on a trip at such an unreasonable hour. The cool hours of evening were, to his dog sense, the proper time to start on a trip.

Big drops and even little streams of cold dew ran down from hazel and willow and other brush that hung into the trail. The boots of the boys were as wet as if the lads had been wading in a marsh, and the cold dew

soaked into the upper part of their tucked-in Mackinaw trousers until the two travelers were wet to the skin and their woolen trousers were as heavy as soaked sponges.

Dan, who was walking ahead, stripped off most of the dew, but there was plenty left to soak into his small brother and even Waggles soon looked as if he had just taken a bath.

For fully half an hour the trio followed the trail in silence until the spires of the spruces and the cloud-like branches of the old pines began to rise out of the grayish pale light of morning.

"What are we starting so dreadful early for anyway?" Harry at last ventured to ask.

"I'll give you a pointer on that, young brother," replied Dan in a low voice.

"The woods haven't as many eyes and ears as the town, but they have eyes and ears a good deal keener. We don't want any half-breed or Indian around here to know where we are going and what we are taking along. Within three or four days Father can tell them we have gone on a trip east and they

will probably think we have gone to look up a good trapping trail or hunting camp for fall. But if any one sees us with these packs he'll know right away that we're after something unusual and he'll try to figure out what it is and some curious fellow may start sneaking around after us, for none of them have a thing to do at this season. And I reckon you and Waggles and I are company enough on this business."

CHAPTER III

ON THE TRAIL

AGAIN the two brothers relapsed into silence. A long twenty miles of hard trail lay before them, near the end of which they would find hidden a birch-bark canoe, a pack-load of steel traps and two pairs of snowshoes, all of which Dan had cached there when the country froze up the preceding fall.

Dan, with his heavy pack, set a rapid pace, and although Harry carried only a small load he had but little wind left for talking and asking questions. As the sun rose above the tree tops, the dew rapidly disappeared from the underbrush. Whitethroats and hermit-thrushes still sang in the thickets. In some small openings, where several years ago fire had destroyed the large trees, woodland sparrows and numerous little warblers chirped

their plain songs. The big black log-cock was hammering on a dead pine and, with a loud scream, took flight as the boys approached, for he has always been one of the shyest of birds.

"Golly, he's a big fellow," remarked Harry, "as big as a crow." But Dan was already two dozen paces ahead and Harry fell into a short trot to catch up with him, and again they moved along in silence.

As noon was approaching they entered a tamarack swamp where the going was unusually bad. Dan, an experienced woodsman, instinctively picked his way over slippery roots and deep holes filled with dark-brown water.

"A beastly rotten trail, you're leading us on," Harry was going to say, when he slipped on a root and, turning a kind of somersault sideways, landed squarely on his stomach in a black pool, and, although he wriggled out as quickly as he could, he was soused and daubed with reddish-brown mud all over.

Harry, who was getting tired and hungry, felt vexed enough to cry, but Dan laughed and

said it was all a part of the game and Harry would soon dry off in the sun. Waggles sniffed and jumped around the pool as if he thought Harry had dived into it after a mouse or chipmunk or frog, for all of which Waggles was always on the alert.

"You fool pup," remarked Harry, as with a handful of grass he brushed off some of the mud, "I'll push you into that mud-hole if you don't stop making fun of me."

And again they marched on, Harry wondering if Dan was going to make the whole twenty miles without stopping for lunch. But he had promised that he wouldn't be a baby and he wasn't going to tell that he was getting tired and hungry.

The sun was now shining almost straight through the pines and through the loose green foliage of tall poplars and birches.

"There," said Dan, as he threw his pack on the soft moss near a still, clear stream; "this is good spring water, and here we'll stop for a bite; we're over half there now. I suppose you're near played out, kid?"

"Not a bit of it, Dan; I could walk a mile yet, but I tell you I'm hungry. You hiked as if somebody was chasing us."

"We want to get out of this country as soon as possible, and there's no telling how long we may have to stop at our canoe. It leaked a little last fall, and I'm just a little afraid a bear may have ripped it. The country is full of them."

The biscuits, which Harry's mother had put into the pack for the small voyager's special benefit, went fine and fast with the hot tea; but Dan would allow Harry only three of them, while Harry said he felt as if he wanted about a dozen.

"This is just a light lunch and a short rest," Dan decided. "You can't march if you're stuffed. To-night you can eat all you want."

After lunch Dan struck a very slow pace. Harry followed at ease and behind trotted Waggles, his tongue lolling out of his mouth, for the day had grown very hot and Waggles was not used to long trips.

On open hillsides the heat waves rose quivering in the air, the scattered branches of tall Norways gave hardly any shade, and only the hobnails in the boots of the boys prevented them from slipping on the dry needles.

The trees and shrubs, the grasses, ferns and flowers, seemed to be almost palpitating with growth, but as for sound or sign of other life, the forest seemed dead.

"Where are all the birds and animals anyway?" asked Harry.

"They're taking a nap, Harry. Birds and animals move and feed in the morning and towards evening; during the hot noon hours they keep quiet. They're wise in their ways and know how to take life easy when they can."

"Where are the big animals? I thought we would see some and I've seen nothing bigger than a red squirrel and a rabbit."

"Each goes to his own country in spring. Moose and deer are in the thickets and swamps around the lakes where they can

hide their young and get into water when the flies are bad. You'll see plenty of them as we travel along."

"Where are the bears and wolves and lynxes?"

"The bears roam about a good deal now. In July and August they find the raspberry and blueberry patches. The lynxes are scattered everywhere and nowhere in particular. The wolves are on high ground where they had their cubs early in spring. But we'll not see many of either of these. They are wary and don't often come into the open and they are apt to hear us and smell us before we see them.

"And now I'll give you another pointer. Cut out noises as much as you can. None of your yelling and calling, and see to it that Waggles doesn't chase and bark after things all the time. I'm afraid that pup will turn out a good deal of a nuisance, but I knew you wanted very much to take him along, and then he's always so happy and cheerful

and looks at a person in such a human-like way,—well, perhaps he may be of some use in camp too.

"But you and Waggles will have to go short on noise. The big creatures of the woods are seldom heard.

"Moose and deer and Indians are nearly always silent. Bears and lynxes and panthers are silent and so are the eagles."

"What about wolves and owls? Don't they make a lot of noise?" Harry threw in.

"Only at times, and then they know what they're howling for; at least the wolves do. What the owl hoots for, I don't know. But you'll not hear or see many wolves.

"The wild things seem to know that every one can sneak upon you, if you make a noise, so they keep still unless they have some use for noise."

"What about the birds?" ventured Harry.

"Oh, yes; the small birds don't have to be afraid of being followed, because they can hop and fly about in the trees and bushes where nothing can follow them."

Time went quickly and the slower pace of travel did not tire Harry. Again they passed up hill and down hill, through spruce and tamarack swamps and through open sunny places where an abundance of small white flowers were spread out over the moss and around the rocks and dead stumps. In several places the travelers touched the lake, on whose blue glittering surface the pines began to cast long shadows.

The birds, although seldom seen, again filled the forest with music. There came again the ever-present whistle of the white-throats, which Harry imitated until one of the birds almost flew into the face of his supposed rival. From the thickets and swamp rang out again the notes of the veery and hermit-thrushes, sweet and melancholy but still strong, as if the little throbbing hearts of the singers were overflowing with some great joy; while from low and open bushes came the medley of song sparrows and warblers, whose chirps and trills and feeble, wiry notes blended like a well-attuned accompani-

ment with the stronger music of thrushes and whitethroats.

Dan slowed up and began to scan carefully the poplars on the right side of the trail.

"We are almost there," he said. "I blazed a poplar a few rods beyond the big fallen log we just climbed over. Our canoe is just ten rods straight south of that blaze, under some old spruces near a small pond and not more than ten rods from Rainy Lake.

"Here is the blaze! Now I only hope the boat's there and that a bear hasn't slashed it or some fool porcupine cut holes into it!" and with that the two boys, much to the surprise of tired and panting Waggles, left the trail and struck into a bad jungle of willows and a leaning and prostrate growth of black alders which had never righted themselves since the heavy snows of three years ago.

CHAPTER IV

THE FIRST NIGHT IN CAMP

THE ten rods seemed to Harry at least a mile long, and he wondered how Dan would ever be able to find anything in this swamp of tangled brush, and how he would ever be able to find his way out again.

Dan, however, walked straight to his cache, but when he stood before the canoe which he had so carefully turned bottom up on two poles, tied to small trees, he angrily dropped his pack and made some strong remarks about fool bears and porcupines who always find everything and monkey with everything they find.

"Confound those four-legged idiots!" he muttered, as he showed Harry a big rent in the side of the canoe and the toothmarks of the porcupine on the heels of the snowshoes.

"Now, we'll have to stop here a day to fix the canoe," he added. "I'm surprised that plaguy porcu didn't cut up the webs of the snowshoes and eat a dozen holes into the canoe so we would have to throw the whole outfit away! Well, no use grumbling; they aren't any worse than some humans I know."

"I guess that means me," thought Harry; however he didn't say so, but asked: "What do they do it for?"

"Well, I guess," explained Dan, getting over his anger, "the snow broke down my poles so the canoe dropped to the ground. A bear happened to come along and took it for some sort of log and so, of course, it was his duty to turn it over to see if there weren't some mice or bugs or ants under it, for a bear is just like you and Waggles; he's always hungry."

Harry passed over this slur on himself and his much-admired pup and asked:

"But why should the porcupine want to eat your snowshoes?"

"The porcupine," his big brother began

with a smile, "has a kink in his character like the Indian. An Indian will sell his soul for a jug of whisky, and if the porcupine had a thousand souls he would sell them all for an old salt barrel and then he'd eat up the old barrel from top to butt. He's plumb crazy for salt and will risk his life to get it.

"I suppose he imagined those snowshoes smelled of salt, so he tasted them to make sure. If there had been any salt in them he would have eaten them up.

"But now let's get busy and make camp. You may cut some balsam boughs and make a bed and I'll set up the tent and make supper."

Harry cut down two bushy balsam-firs and with his sharp sheath-knife cut off the branches about a foot and a half long. Two armfuls he laid in position to serve as pillows. The other boughs he arranged in a thick soft layer. The butt of each bough was set on the ground while the soft sprays slanted upward toward the pillows of the boys. Then he spread a blanket over the

soft green mattress of boughs and laid out the second blanket ready to be used as a cover.

"Look here, Dan," he asked when he was through; "how's this?"

"Good job," remarked Dan; "you did it quick and just as I showed you. Now get ready for supper."

Harry ran quickly to the pond, hastily washed his hands and face, and sat down at the camp-fire.

"Hand out the goods, Dan," he said. "Can I eat all I want now? I never was so nearly starved in my life."

"Yes, you can eat all you want of this supper if you will eat slowly. We have plenty of time; it will not be dark for three hours yet."

Waggles had curled up for a nap as soon as he saw that his masters were making camp. But Waggles had either been born with or had acquired the ability to wake up when supper was served. He uncurled himself, shook his soft hanging ears into proper

position, sat down where the smoke did not strike him, and with his brown eyes he began to look most appealingly at Harry; from time to time he uttered a low whine and wagged his tail as far as that was possible in his sitting posture.

"Lie down, Waggles!" ordered Dan; "What's the matter with your table manners?"

"Oh, come on, Dan," pleaded Harry; "he's one of us now; he doesn't have to wait till we are through. Let me give him a venison bone. I know he's half starved."

Dan did not object, but remarked with a smile: "Mother spoiled both you and the pup."

Waggles seemed to comprehend the situation perfectly. He stood up, whined a little louder, wagged his tail, licked his chops and spoke and pawed for his bone with a will as soon as Harry had it ready.

Dan had set up a big supper, consisting of a lot of Mother's biscuits heated in a frying-pan, several big chunks of venison and some

most fragrant rashers of bacon; but it all went, and Waggles disposed of the bones and crumbs and scraps and was looking for more.

"My," said Harry, when he had drunk his cup of hot tea and the tin dishes had been washed and turned over near the fire, "I'm mighty glad I made the bed before supper. I couldn't do it now. I'm too full to wiggle."

Soon the evening grew cool. The boys put on their Mackinaw coats and added some more dry wood to the fire, while Waggles curled up as close to the fire as he could without singeing his hair.

As the boys had no more work to do for the day, they became conscious once more of the woodland sounds. Whitethroats, hermits and veeries were again in full song, a junco tinkled his plain ditty from a near-by opening, while from the alder marsh behind them came the sweet warble of the winter wren, much more musical than the song of the house wren.

From the top of a tall spruce near the

pool in front of them came a wild and weird sound new to Harry. "Yip pe weer!" the bird seemed to cry.

"What is it, Dan?" the smaller boy asked. "It's sure a funny song."

"It's some kind of a fly-catcher. There he sits on the top of a spruce. Look how he darts after flies from time to time."

From the lake came the long-drawn cry of a loon.

"Listen, Dan," remarked Harry with a twinkle; "there's a fellow who makes a big noise in the woods. He sure beats me and the pup."

"Yes," replied Dan, "but there's some meaning in his noise. He's calling to his mate or his young and he must call loud because they are often a mile or more away." And again the long-drawn scream rang out, sounding almost like a sharp howl of a dog or wolf.

Then the boys talked about home and Harry wondered if they could ever send word home to tell how they were getting

along, and Dan thought they might fall in with some Indians or trappers who could take a message to their parents and sister.

It was still daylight when the boys crept under their blankets and closed the tent so no mosquitoes could get in. For a few minutes they lay listening to the whitethroats' "Sow wheat, Peaverly, Peaverly, Peaverly," and to the hermits' weird "Whirree, whirree —zee, zee," then, after the fatigue and excitement of the day, drowsiness overcame them and they fell into a dreamless sleep with Waggles curled up at the foot of their bed.

CHAPTER V

WAGGLES IS INITIATED

THE June nights are short in the north woods. When the lads awoke, the sun was sending its slanting rays through the boughs and bushes and a medley of bird song filled the woods. Harry had a feeling that he had been dreaming of white-throats and hermits and veeries and that it was their music that woke him up.

"Pesky things," he drawled, still half asleep. "I wish they'd let a fellow sleep."

"Rub your eyes, kid," Dan told him; "they have been singing their best ever since three o'clock. It takes more than bird song to wake you. A pair of loons had a fine long-distance talk an hour ago. One gave his cry right above our tent and you never heard him."

"I surely did sleep some," admitted Harry, as he sat up and stretched himself.

As they sat eating their breakfast they heard a splash on the other side of the pool and saw something red step into the water for a drink.

"Look, Dan, look!" whispered Harry. "Waggles, you fool pup, lie down! It's a big buck! Doesn't he look fine!"

They watched the buck through some thin bushes as he began to feed around the pool. In a little while he had passed around far enough to get the wind of the boys and the dog. He threw his head up high and looked sharp at the campers. A minute later he sprang into the thicket behind him.

"Keep perfectly still," whispered Dan; "there he is again!"

The head and antlers of the buck appeared, pushed out of the thick branches of white cedar. He sniffed the air a minute, then gave a long whistling snort and disappeared in the thicket. Twice more he snorted and for about five minutes they heard him stamp

and slash about in the brush. Waggles was tense with subdued excitement. His hair bristled and, try as he might, he couldn't help uttering just the lowest kind of whine through his nose.

"Let's give him a run after the buck!"

"Not by a long sight! If he starts that, he's spoiled and will be chasing after deer all the time."

"Do you think we'll see lots of deer and moose on our trip?"

"Yes, we ought to see hundreds of them. From here to Grand Portage we'll make about four hundred miles as we follow the bends of the long crooked lake and wind about amongst the islands, and both deer and moose go into the water a great deal on all fine days from now till August."

"Are we going to hunt any? Our grub isn't going to last long."

"We won't have time to hunt and won't need to hunt. We'll get a yearling buck now and then and jerk the meat and you can fish all you want.

"Now I must get some birch bark and spruce root to fix the canoe.

"You and Waggles can go down to the lake; it's only about a hundred yards straight south. See if you can get us a few fish for dinner and supper and look out you don't get lost."

"Can I go in swimming?"

"No, Harry. No swimming when I am not with you. The lake is cold and very deep and I'd be worried if you went in alone. We'll both go down this evening and have a dip."

Harry worked his way carefully across the woods to the lake. With the aid of some brush he caught some minnows for bait, and within a few hours he had all the bass and wall-eyed pike that he and Dan could eat that day.

As Harry and Waggles were slowly strolling through the woods back to camp, the dog, who was a few rods ahead of Harry, began to bark furiously at something. Harry ran up and found that Waggles was barking and

dancing around a porcupine. He was so much interested in this new strange animal that he paid no attention to Harry's calling, and before Harry could pull him away, the dog had closed in and the porcupine's spiny tail had struck him a savage blow square on the right side of his face.

Such howls of agony Waggles never let out before! He jumped up in the air, he rolled on the ground, he pawed at his face, shrieking all the time with agony. Harry tried to call him but Waggles didn't hear.

At last Harry picked him up and ran to camp with him as fast as he could. But he had a hard time to hold the writhing dog, and got his own arms and hands full of porcupine quills.

"What in the world is up?" exclaimed Dan, as the yelping dog and the crying boy came near camp.

"Waggles—Waggles—found—a porcu—porcupine!" cried Harry between sobs.

"Dan, come, help him. Quick! It'll kill him. He's all froth at the mouth!"

Dan threw the end of a blanket over Waggles.

"Hold him down tight!" he told Harry.

Then he seized a pair of pincers and began to pull out the spines.

It was such a terribly painful operation that the poor dog couldn't help uttering many a yelp of pain as the spines were pulled out.

Poor Waggles looked as if he was growing a new grizzled beard all over his face. Carefully, so as not to break them, Dan pulled the spines out of his nose, his mouth and his tongue. Many stuck through his ear flap, some had pinned his eyelids together and others were in his right fore leg and shoulder. At last Dan had pulled out all he could find, over a hundred by actual count.

Harry gave his dog a wash in the pool and put him to bed in the tent.

"I'll kill every one of those beasts I come across," he vowed. "What are they good for anyhow? Can they throw the quills? Are they poisonous?"

"No, they can't throw them, and they aren't poisonous," Dan answered.

Harry wanted to know several other things about the porcupine and Dan showed him the barbed ridges which make it so hard to pull them out and cause them to work in deeper and deeper. He told him that young wild animals or animals crazed with hunger sometimes attack the porcupine and then get punished like Waggles.

"Once," he said, "when I was trapping in northern Michigan, I found the skin of a porcupine neatly slit open below and pulled off and the porcupine eaten up. Trappers say the fisher knows how to do this trick, but I haven't seen it done.

"You had better not kill any porcupines. They are harmless and glad to be let alone. If you are ever starving in the woods, a porcupine may save your life, because it's about the only game a man can find almost any day and kill with a club."

"I'd rather starve than eat a porcupine."

"No, you wouldn't. A porcupine is a clean

animal and eats nothing but bark and twigs and leaves and such things, and if the meat is parboiled it isn't bad, though it is a little strong."

Waggles took no interest in anything for several days. His face swelled up as if he had the mumps, his right eye was closed and he walked on three legs.

"I bet," remarked Harry, "he won't tackle any more porcus, Dan."

"He will not if he has any sense. But some dogs, like some humans, learn nothing from experience; they are just born foolish.

"I hope we have not attracted any visitors by all this noise. We'll be off early to-morrow. I'm anxious to get away from here."

CHAPTER VI

OFF ON A LONG CRUISE

WITH a clear sky and no wind they started on their long cruise next morning. As far as possible they avoided the usual canoe routes, but looked carefully through all the bays away from the main route of travel.

"If Silver Island is not in Lake Superior," reasoned Dan, "it must lie in some bay seldom visited by any one except gulls and cormorants, or in some near-by lake which Hamigeesek may have visited on his trip. There is no use in looking for it on the regular routes, because these have been traveled by the birch bark of the Chippewas for maybe a thousand years and by the white fur-traders for at least a century."

In the evening Dan always carried the boat ashore and hid it in the timber, while he al-

ways made camp still farther back in the timber, so their fire and smoke could not be seen from the lake.

In the course of a few days they examined dozens of small islands but all consisted of the same hard reddish rock with nothing on them but the white droppings of water birds.

On the third day Dan killed a young buck who was standing in shallow water as the canoe rounded a curve,—it was the first shot they had fired on the whole trip. They pulled the yearling into the canoe and stopped at noon to dress their game and prepare the meat.

The meat was salted after all the bone had been cut out, and was then dried and smoked and cooked at the same time on a frame of slender poles under which Dan kept a slow fire until midnight.

"See what a big heart this little buck has!" remarked Harry as Dan took out the entrails.

"A deer needs a powerful heart to run

away from the wolves in winter and early spring."

As Harry examined the small velvet-covered antlers of the buck he wanted to know why the does and moose cows didn't have horns to drive away the wolves from their fawns and calves.

"They don't need them," Dan informed him. "If they have to fight a wolf or coyote, or lynx or wild cat, they strike with their forefeet, and their hoofs cut like knives. But wolves don't bother deer and moose much in summer; they destroy big game when the deep snow is covered with a thin crust which makes deer and moose break through at every step, but which allows the wolves to run right over the snow."

"What do the bucks and bull moose use their horns for?"

"For fighting each other in the rutting season. At that time the bucks and bulls do a lot of fighting; you may see some of them at it if we are still in the woods in September and October."

"Wouldn't you like to be a hunter and trapper, Dan?"

"No, I wouldn't. It's a cruel and bloody business. I want to find that island and then we'll all go back to Detroit if Father's health is good, and I'll go back to Harvard and finish my course there. I'd rather study under Professor Agassiz than do anything else. I would rather not trap at all, but a man can't earn any money by anything else in this country."

And thus the journey continued. The lads were on the water from ten to twelve hours daily, searching through every bay and out-of-the-way channel, while a long spell of fine weather allowed them to make from thirty to fifty miles a day. Dan, seated in the stern, picked the course and steered, Harry, in the bow, worked steadily with his light spruce paddle, while Waggles, who had completely recovered from the results of his encounter with the porcupine, snoozed lazily among the packs in the middle, and when he couldn't sleep any more, he sat up on his

haunches and watched things on shore and in the air with as much interest as the boys themselves, and he looked as if he would take part in the conversations and discussions if he only had the ability to talk.

When a big buck or a doe with her two spotted fawns stood and gazed at the passing canoe, Waggles always woke up and whined as if he wanted to ask permission to jump out of the boat. Sometimes he sniffed the air and whined with excitement when the boys could neither see nor hear nor smell anything.

"I guess he smells a wild cat or a lynx," said Dan. "He certainly hates cats and used to have some great cat hunts in Detroit, but he'd last just about five seconds with one of these wild forest cats."

But whenever the wind brought the strong rancid odor of porcupine from shore, Waggles sidled around in his place and quivered and whined and growled with excitement, and one morning when the canoe passed within two rods of a porcupine which had

climbed out on a fallen log and was leisurely pulling yellow lily leaves out of the water for his breakfast, Waggles would have jumped overboard if Dan had not gently tapped him on the head with the paddle and sharply ordered him to lie down.

"I believe that flap-eared terrier will start a scrap again with the next porcupine he meets," commented Dan. "If he does, I'll tie a stone to his neck and drop him in the lake."

"Oh, come off now, Dan!" remonstrated Harry. "You wouldn't!

"Shucks! You don't blame him for having a grouch against porcupines, do you? I wouldn't have a pup who's always scared and can't fight anything.

"You're all right, Waggles! Great pup. I'll kill the porcus for you."

"No, you won't," laughed Dan. "You and your pup just steer shy of porcupines."

But one thing Waggles was afraid of, much to the amusement of the boys.

Whenever one of the big white herring-

gulls sailed close over or past the boat, as they often did, Waggles ducked his head and looked after it quizzically as if he meant to ask:

"What sort of spook is that, anyhow?"

To the great eagles and fish-hawks, and the big black turkey buzzards, who often floated or sailed in graceful spirals high overhead, the dog paid no attention; evidently they were beyond the reach of his vision.

On about the tenth day out, as the boys were headed into a wide open bay, the weather, which had been threatening for an hour, suddenly changed, and a strong northwester raised big waves on the lake.

"Work hard, kid," said Dan. "We're in for a squall; we must make the north shore as quickly as we can."

Within fifteen minutes the white caps broke over the gunwale.

"Drop the paddle, Harry, and bale her out! Quick, or we'll be swamped!" ordered Dan, excitedly.

And Harry, kneeling in several inches of water, worked as he had never worked before. But the storm and waves increased every minute, and wave after wave splashed over the gunwale.

The gale made it impossible for Dan to head the canoe just right, and a big wave rushed in with a swash, but the next moment with a few desperate strokes, Dan pushed the canoe up on a sand-beach in the lee of a high bare island of rock.

"Thank God!" he exclaimed. "I surely thought we'd have to swim for it."

Over their paddles and a few pieces of driftwood the brothers hurriedly threw their tent and weighed the edges down with rocks. Their canoe and packs they had already pulled up out of reach of the waves.

And then the cold rain came down as if the heavens had been slashed wide open. The lake and the shore close by were swallowed up in the gray mass of storm-lashed torrents. Even the echoes of the crashes of thunder from the wall of the tall pines on

the mainland were swallowed in the uproar.

The sunlit lake and forest had vanished before their eyes, and the world had been transformed into a furious swirling mass of gray water, cut and slashed by a rapid succession of straight flashes of lightning, followed immediately by sharp crashes as if immense cannon balls were fired into a thick stand of pines.

And still the tumult seemed to grow. Louder and still louder a deep roar seemed to approach from the northwest.

"What is it?" whispered Harry, turning a blanched face to his brother.

And then a white stone jumped up from the rock in front of them and another and still more, thousands of them now, and the deep deafening roar of a hailstorm enveloped them and shut them in. On the tent the white stones slumped and rumbled, on the rock they fell with a sharp crackling, and the pieces rebounded and squirmed as high as the tent and over it. Into the lake they

plunged and plumped, millions and millions of them, with a noise the like of which Dan, in all his experiences, had never heard.

In less than half an hour the fury of the storm had passed, but the wind continued high and shower after shower was driven up from the northwest.

"What are we going to do?" asked Harry.

"We'll stay here until the world has time to get quieted down again," replied Dan. "There's plenty of driftwood lying around, and when we can get a fire started we'll be all right."

Starting a fire was not as difficult as the novice in woodcraft might think. With a sharp ax they had soon cut out some dry chips of fatwood from an old pine. Some more dry pieces were cut out of the heart of a drift log, and in a little while they had a fire on which any kind of fuel would burn. As the old stumps and logs began to crackle in the big blaze in front of their open tent, the boys were soon as warm and comfortable

as they could have been in the coziest city parlor.

The weather turning very cold, they kept the fire burning all night, which compelled Dan to get up twice to put on more wood, while Harry slept soundly until Dan called him in the morning. Waggles also never got out from under the blanket at the foot of Harry's bed all night, although he was awake every time Dan moved.

CHAPTER VII

A SPOOKY NIGHT

WHEN the boys looked around in the morning, they found the pockets among the rock still filled with hailstones the size of walnuts, and some as big as a boy's fist. After they had been weatherbound on the island for two days, they continued their journey and on the first evening they reached the west end of the largest island in the lake, Hunter's Island, which is surrounded by two long and narrow arms of the lake, and they made camp a little inland at the west point of it.

The weather had again turned very hot and having made about forty miles, they turned in early. But they were more tired than sleepy and for an hour they lay and talked things over in a low voice.

"I feel as if we were lost," said the smaller

boy. "I don't see, Dan, how you can ever find your way in such a mixed-up country."

"It is a mixed-up country, sure enough," replied Dan. "And yet, finding your way through it is not as hard as it looks. I have a sketch-map of our route and I know our general direction is southeast. The regular portages are all well traveled and then I've been over the route twice."

"Seems to me we're ten thousand miles from home and have been canoeing around a year. We'll never find that little island, Dan. A fellow couldn't find a mountain in this mix-up of lakes and islands."

"Oh, rot, kid! We haven't missed any Silver Island yet. In fact, I feel sure it isn't here; it's in Lake Superior. The Indians and trappers know this country better than you know your coat pockets.

"We want to hurry and get to Lake Superior and that's where our search and our troubles will begin in earnest."

"What's the trouble going to be?"

"The lake is as big as the ocean, and in a

storm the waves run as high as a house, and sometimes the fog is so thick that you can't see fifty feet ahead of you."

"Is it true that the lake never gives up its dead?"

"Guess it is, kid. The water is always ice-cold and a body sunk in it never rises again as it does in warm, shallow lakes and in rivers. Now, I guess we had better go to sleep."

But Harry couldn't sleep. A pale moon made the canvas of the tent seem aglow as with the spooky phosphorescence of fox fire. A warm, gray fog filled the forest and covered the lake, and although not a breath of air was stirring, the woods were alive with sounds and noises as if every wild creature was moving about after the few days of cold stormy weather.

Harry had at last fallen asleep when a sharp noise not far from the tent made him sit bolt upright.

"What was it, Dan?" he asked, wild-eyed and shivering with excitement.

"Ah, shame on you, kid! I should think you knew the snort of a buck by this time."

"Listen, Dan; he acts as if he were going to fight us."

"Fight us, nothing. That's his danger signal to every deer within hearing, and all the other wild animals understand it, too. A buck never shows himself after he snorts, and he never fights man or dog unless he's cornered or wounded."

The snorting of the deer excited a big horned owl and he began to hoot his deep "whoo-who-whoo, who-whoo," right over the tent.

Harry gave a start.

"Whew," he whispered; "mighty glad I'm not a rabbit or a woodchuck! I'd be a goner, sure!"

As the deep hooting of the big owl died away in the distance a little screech owl uttered his low, chuckling call from a thicket, and from the lake came the piercing, long-drawn scream of the loon who had been awakened from his slumber on the water.

After awhile all was silent once more, only a bat uttered its fine squeak as it fluttered around the tent in search of flying insects, and in the rotten logs the big grubs could be plainly heard gnawing the dead wood.

Waggles had not shown any interest in any of these noises. He always bristled at the scent of a porcupine and lynx, but to the scent and snorting of deer he had grown indifferent.

The boys talked for another half-hour and once more were both dozing off, when suddenly the dog did become interested in some slight noise outside. He lifted his head, sniffed the air, and uttering a deep angry growl, he shot out of the tent, and with a combination of savage growls, snarls, shrieks and barks, he fought and pursued something which rapidly slipped through the underbrush with the dog hot on its heels.

Dan jumped into his boots, grabbed his gun, and without saying a word to Harry, ran after the dog, which he overtook on the lake shore, still mad with fright and acting

as if he would swim after something that had just taken to the water.

But Dan could see nothing, and no matter how intently he listened, there was not a sound. Whatever Waggles had chased, it seemed to have dived to the bottom as silently as might a loon. The cause of all this excitement, whatever it had been, had vanished like a ghost. Only the pale moonlight and the gray fog enveloped lake and forest, the black, deep water lay before them, and behind them stood the forest, dark and silent.

"It beats me!" whispered Dan, as Harry came running up, clad only in his boots and flannel shirt. "What in the world can the pup have been chasing?

"Lynx, cat or porcupine or bear wouldn't have taken to the water. It might have been a moose, but your pup never showed any interest in moose-scent and if it was a moose, I ought to have heard it getting out on the other shore; it's only a few hundred yards across."

"I—I bet, it—it was a man!" whispered Harry, scarcely able to speak after his run.

"We'll find out in the morning what it was," said Dan, as they picked their way back to the tent. "If it was a man, I know who it was!"

"Who?" asked Harry.

"Le Noir, that half-breed. Everybody thinks he's a scoundrel, though nobody ever proved a crime on him.

"Two years ago a half-breed from Ottawa went trapping with Le Noir to the Lake of the Woods. Le Noir came back in the spring with a big lot of fur and told that the Ottawa man was drowned in a storm on Lake of the Woods. Anyway, the man never came back, and being a stranger, nobody went to the trouble to investigate."

"Do you think Le Noir killed him?"

"That's what everybody suspects, but nobody has proved it."

"What could Le Noir want of us?"

"Make trouble, and get a share of the Island, if we find it. Or he might kill us and

get it all. I don't trust him out of sight. He's got the shifting eye and is a sort of combination bad white man and bad Indian. He's a regular spy. He's probably heard some rumor about Hamigeesek finding a silver mine. I know that he was bursting to find out where Hamigeesek and Sellsby had gone to, and, of course, he was curious to find out where we had gone as soon as he learned we had left St. Frances on a trip 'east.'

"If he is on our trail, we have our work cut out. It will be mighty hard to lose him, for he was born in the Chippewa country and knows this tangle of lakes and woods a great deal better than I do. Well, we'll do some sharp tracking in the morning."

There was no more sleep for the boys that night. Again and again they thought they heard the furtive tread of Indian or half-breed, but the calm sleep of Waggles reassured them that it was only the falling of a rotten twig or the scurrying of some little woodmouse or other harmless creature.

"Waggles has the advantage of us," observed Dan, as the first gray dawn made things in the tent visible. "Our eyes and ears are easily fooled, but you can't fool that pup's nose."

As they were talking, Waggles began to make some queer motions and noises.

"Look at him," chuckled Harry; "he's dreaming!"

Evidently even the nerves of Waggles had been unstrung by his adventure, and he was living it all over again in his dream.

Lying flat on his side, his short legs and his feet jerked and kicked as if he was trying hard to run. His eyes were closed, but his lips twitched and he barked and yelped through his nose in such a funny way that Harry broke into a loud laugh and called: "Cats, Waggles, cats!" at which the dog sprang up with a start, to the great amusement of both of the boys.

As soon as it was daylight, they put the dog on the trail of their mysterious visitor. No sign of moose or bear could be found in

the woods, and the short brush and weeds gave them no other clue.

At the lake, the trail led over a small patch of grass right down to the water's edge.

"Look here, Dan," Harry pointed out; "here's a moccasin track and here's the mark of a canoe where it was pulled out of the water."

"It's Le Noir!" Dan asserted. "Hang the scoundrel! He's watching us now from some ambush. But we'll shake him yet. Bless his soul if I ever catch him at this dirty game of his!"

"Maybe it was an Indian ghost, Dan!"

"Oh, rats, Harry! I hope you don't believe in such nonsense even if you're only a kid," Dan came out bluntly. "It's only the blooming cowards who see ghosts. There aren't any ghosts, neither red nor white. That thing last night was a live man."

CHAPTER VIII

LOSING THE SPY AND FINDING A QUEER ISLAND

WHILE the brothers were eating breakfast, Dan unfolded his plan of sending their pursuer off on a wrong trail.

"I'm convinced," he began, "that the rogue is in hiding not far away, where he can see the point of the island and both the North and the South Channel.

"We'll make him think that we are going to stay here all day, but we'll pull out as soon as we have the ruse fixed up for him.

"I'll fire my gun near the point, and he will think we shot a deer, and then comes your part of the game."

"Go ahead," demanded Harry eagerly. "What's my stunt?"

"After I have fired my gun, you go out on the point and build a frame for drying the

meat and make a low, smoldering fire under your frame. Then I'll bring the hide of our small buck and hang it on a pole where he can't help seeing it. He'll be sure to recognize the red of the deer.

"Then we'll also build a good smoking fire a little way back from the point and he'll think that's our camp-fire where we are cooking and smoking the rest of the meat."

"But how're we going to get away without his seeing us, Dan?"

"That's easy. As soon as our fires are smoking right, we carry our canoe half a mile through the woods around the next point and paddle away.

"He will think we are still in camp and will not dare to show himself during the day, but he'll probably come nosing around after midnight. We will make a big plain trail to the North Channel and as faint a trail as possible to the South Channel. If he takes the North Channel, as he most likely will, he's lost us; anyway, we are a day ahead of him."

The boys carried out this plan leisurely, and with a fair wind behind them, they made good time up the South Channel.

About the middle of the afternoon they entered the outlet of Long Lake which comes in from the south. When they came to the foot of the rapids in this outlet, they did not leave the water, but pushed and carried their canoe and packs up stream, and towards evening they made camp in a secluded bay on the west side of Long Lake, pitching their tent on a dry knoll under some small birches and jack pines.

"Why didn't we go a little farther and camp in that grove of Norways?" asked Harry; "where there isn't any underbrush?"

But Dan informed him that it was never a good plan to camp near or under big and old trees. "A sudden storm may break them down and lightning often strikes a big tree. If one cruised these woods over carefully, I don't think he would find a quarter-section where at one time or another the lightning hasn't struck some big tree."

"Does lightning strike one kind of tree more than others?" Harry wanted to know.

"I don't think so. Some people think elms attract the lightning more than other trees, but I doubt it. It generally strikes elms and cottonwoods and Norways and white pines because they are often bigger than the trees around them, but I have also found spruces that had been struck."

As soon as camp was pitched, the boys went for a swim in the warm lake. There were very few mosquitoes, because there had been very little rain during the summer, and after supper the boys sat at the camp-fire and enjoyed the summer evening.

The whitethroats, at this season, had almost ceased singing, but the ecstasy of the thrushes came still ringing from the thickets around them until the sun had sunk behind the pines to the west and darkness began to settle over the great forest.

When the thrushes became silent and a little tree-frog struck up its high-pitched, rattling call, the boys rolled in, and feeling free

from danger, they slept soundly until several hours after daylight.

"We might as well camp here a few days," Dan suggested at breakfast. "There are several small islands in this lake that I have never looked at. We ought to find plenty of moose here and we want to give Le Noir time to get a good ways off the trail."

Almost two miles from shore they saw a small island which presented a curious appearance. It looked like a low white reef, marked with black spots and streaks.

"The queerest dark bushes I ever saw," remarked Harry.

But when they had approached within a mile, they noticed that the island was just a ridge of sand and big boulders, and that it was inhabited by flocks of black cormorants or nigger geese, as the trappers call them. At least five hundred of these large birds almost covered the island, sitting upright and forming the large black streaks and patches which the boys had at first taken for dark bushes.

As the canoe approached, there was a great stirring among the birds. Many of the adults took wing, circled silently above the island and gradually scattered and disappeared in the distance. A hundred or more wabbled down the rocks and swam away with only their heads and necks showing above the water, while two or three hundred more remained on the rocks. These sat bolt upright, constantly moved their long necks and their long hooked bills back and forth, as if they were going to fight the intruders, and filled the air with a high deafening cackle.

"Whew!" cried Harry, holding his nose, as they walked around among the nests and young of all ages; "rottenest-smelling goose-coop I ever was in. Look at the lumps of dead fish! Where did they come from?"

"The nestlings threw them up, I guess," ventured Dan; "it's a queer way they have of defending themselves."

The island certainly was a sight! Over a hundred nests crudely built of reeds and

coarse feathers, were scattered over the small island, each containing three or four young or eggs. Many of the young were full grown and sat around their nests like watch-dogs.

"Queerest birds I ever saw!" commented Harry. "Look at their long bills and yellow throat pouches!"

Some of the young did not yet have their eyes open, and had no feathers. They were not white, like most young birds, but were covered with a blackish-brown skin. "Regular pickaninnies!" Dan called them.

When the boys were on one end of the island, dozens of the "nigger geese" returned to the other end and sat on the rocks and dried their wings in the sun.

"Well, kid, let's pull away from this," remarked Dan. "It's a great sight, but," and he held his nose, "this is not our island.

"It's going to be a corking hot day and the moose will go into the lake. Let's be off for a moose hunt!"

CHAPTER IX

THE MOOSE HUNT

HARRY, who had never seen a moose close by, wanted to know how big they were.

"As big as a horse," Dan told him. "But their legs seem longer, and the great horns of a big bull make him look much bigger than a horse. An old moose cow looks very much like a mule, but a moose hasn't any tail to speak of and no real mane, although the hair on the shoulder hump is pretty long, especially in winter."

They laid out their course in such a way that they had the sun behind them and the wind ahead of them.

"You can't often get close if they get your wind," said Dan.

"Are we going to shoot one of them?" asked Harry.

"No; what for? We couldn't save more than about a hundred pounds of the meat, and a big moose weighs easily twelve hundred pounds or more. We'll get another small deer when we need meat. It would be a shame to kill one of these grand animals and then let the maggots and the wolves eat it."

"Why can't we kill a calf?"

"You can, if you want to; but now we must begin to watch, and if we find a calf, I'll let you kill it if you want to."

Dan was now sharply scanning the shore about a mile away, where swamps of white cedar, tamarack, black spruce, and alder were separated from the lake by only a narrow ridge of high land.

"That's good moose country," he pointed out. "I think I see one now. Run your eyes along the tamarack swamp just this side of yonder point."

Harry looked for moose so hard that he forgot to paddle.

"Don't see a thing," he replied after

awhile. "You're not fooling me? I see a lot of black patches,—shadows, I guess they are."

"Just peel your spyers, kid. One of those dark patches is a moose, and a big one too. Watch the light changing on one of the patches; that patch is a moose."

"I see him, I see him!" cried Harry, after some more sharp spying. "He's near the big dead tamarack."

Paddling fast but silently, they soon were near enough to see that it was a big bull, feeding in water half-way up to his flanks.

From time to time he brought up a big mouthful of weeds, then he shook his head so the boys could plainly hear the flapping of his big ears. The water ran and dripped from the weeds, and the big beast chewed them slowly as an ox chews a mouthful of hay.

"Stop paddling now," directed Dan; "he's getting a little suspicious. If we make a noise or if he gets our wind he'll go."

Again the big head and antlers disap-

peared under water until for fifteen or twenty seconds the big creature looked like a boulder.

"Golly," whispered Harry, "he could beat me diving. No wonder that I couldn't find him."

After awhile the animal walked slowly out of the water and stood on the point looking at the canoe, but as the canoe lay perfectly quiet, he took no alarm and disappeared leisurely around the point.

The boys followed him around the point as fast as they could go, and there stood the giant bull, broadside on, in shallow water. For a few seconds he looked at the canoeists, then he started for deep water across the narrows.

"Look," whispered Harry; "he's a monster!"

"Pull, kid, pull!" Dan gave the word; "let's try to head him off!"

But with astonishing speed the moose reached deep water and started to swim with only his head and the big flat antlers show-

ing above the water. Using all four legs as paddles he could go faster than the canoe. He rose like a monster from the deep as soon as his feet touched bottom again, and with long strides the powerful legs and the big black hoofs churned the water into splashing and foaming swirls. With the light canoe only a few yards behind, he broke through the shore fringe of cedar; for a few seconds he crashed and slashed through branches and underbrush, then the wild stirring sound vanished in the distance and the moose was gone.

"He won't come back for a few days," Dan laughed. "They are pretty shy where they are disturbed. That's the reason you find very few of them along a regular canoe route where the traders and Indians fire at them."

"I tell you," acknowledged Harry, "I was scared of the beast. He'd make kindling of our boat mighty quick."

"A bull moose doesn't attack a man except in the rutting season," Dan replied; "but at

that time you don't want to fool with any moose that has a good pair of horns on."

As they followed the sinuous shore of the lake they saw many more moose, and deer also were fairly abundant. With one young cow which they found swimming across a bay they started a regular race and came so close to her that they could almost touch her with a paddle. Several times they could hear the heavy breathing of the creature and could plainly see the red in her large dilated nostrils, but at those moments she always changed her course suddenly and left her pursuers behind. This exciting race continued for ten or fifteen minutes, when the moose struck bottom, and with a long swinging trot broke for the thicket, leaving behind her a trail of foaming water.

A very large cow got their wind and heard them talk at the distance of a quarter of a mile, and the boys could plainly see the giant beast standing in an inquisitive attitude, sniffing the air and moving her big ears back and forth to catch the strange sounds. Evi-

lently she had soon smelled and heard enough, for she turned around and walked leisurely into the forest.

Two big bulls they found peacefully feeding in a small bay, but when the canoe came up close, they swung into the forest in different directions like a couple of gambling Bowery urchins at the approach of the feared policeman.

For several hours, the boys were seldom out of sight of either moose or deer.

"Gee," exclaimed Harry, as the two bulls disappeared into a thicket of young poplars and birches, "these woods are just alive with game, but I haven't seen any calves yet. Where are they?"

"Most of them are still kept hidden in the thick mossy swamps, but I think we'll see some yet.

"I think I see one now! Do you see that cow about a mile ahead? There's some small brown animal with her. That's her calf."

Very carefully they worked up to them until they could plainly see every movement of

the animals. The big cow splashed in the water with her forefeet, while her little calf seemed to be afraid to go in. Now it was on this side, now on that side of its mother who gradually coaxed it in a little farther.

Closer and closer the canoe approached, and both cow and calf stood looking at it.

"There, Harry!" said Dan; "there's your chance for a shot!"

"I don't want to shoot it," Harry answered. "Let's see how close we can get to it."

"All right; but be careful. There's no fooling with a moose cow if she thinks her calf is in danger."

"Ah, shucks," retorted Harry, whose courage with moose had grown fast during the forenoon; "she can't hurt us; she's got no horns anyway."

Slowly Dan pushed the canoe towards the little brown calf. With glaring eyes and bristling shoulder-mane the big cow stood watching the canoe. Harry did not look at the cow, he only saw the little brown calf

which stood gazing at the boat with the innocent curiosity of a domestic calf. Now they were so close that Harry could not resist the temptation to touch the staring young creature.

The touch of a human hand seemed suddenly to electrify the animal, and trembling with instinctive fear, it uttered a loud bleating bellow, and before either Dan or Harry had time to think, the big enraged cow was upon them in defense of her calf. With one of her forefeet she struck the canoe a savage blow, right in the middle, driving it to the bottom.

"Out for the lake!" yelled Dan, and with that he grabbed Harry by his shirt collar and pulled him into deep water as fast as he could.

"Swim out! She'll kill you if she strikes you!"

The enraged moose in the meantime, by literally trampling on the canoe, cut a dozen gashing holes into it and almost broke it in two in the middle.

Waggles, who had had a narrow escape

from being cut in two, had swum ashore in a hurry, and had begun to bark savagely at the enraged moose as soon as he landed.

This distracted the attention of the mad cow from the bobbing canoe, and she rushed furiously at Waggles who had to dodge behind trees and stumps on shore to save his life. In the meantime the puzzled brown calf had walked ashore and Waggles rushed savagely at its heels. Again the calf uttered its appeal for help, and so quick was the response of the cow that Waggles received a sharp glancing blow on his back and was knocked over before he knew that the big moose was there. He realized that he was too small to fight a mad moose, and with a few yelps and barks he scurried for cover under the roots of a fallen tree, from which safe retreat he bobbed in and out and kept up a savage barking.

But the moose seemed to have forgotten him. Uttering a low whining sort of call, she sniffed at the calf as if to make sure that it was not hurt, and at the same time she started

"Swim out! She'll kill you if she strikes you!"—*Page 83.*

walking toward the woods with the frightened calf huddling close to her side.

Dan and Harry had swum back to the boat when the moose left it.

Dan stood speechless, looking at the canoe, and by the time he recovered from his surprise, the moose had disappeared into the woods.

"Well, I'll be jiggered!" he exclaimed; "if that big brute didn't make kindling of the whole boat!"

Harry didn't say a word, because he felt that he had brought on the whole trouble by touching the calf, but when Dan started to pick up their floating packs and bring the gun and other things up from the bottom, Harry began to carry the things ashore and spread them out to dry, expecting every minute a big scolding from Dan. But Dan, who felt even more guilty than Harry, sat down on a rock and began to wring the water out of his clothes.

"Confound that fool moose!" he grumbled; "who would have thought that such a big

beast could move so quickly. Now we'll have to stay here till I build another canoe. You can use the birch bark of this one to start your camp fires."

CHAPTER X

BUILDING A CANOE AND EXPLORING THE WILDERNESS

DAN lost no time in getting at his work, because he realized that spring had already passed and midsummer had arrived.

The progress of the season was best marked by the disappearance of certain flowers and the appearance of others.

The yellowish-green Clintonias which covered the forest floor everywhere when the boys started on their trip, were gone, and showed only the large lily-like leaves. The white carpets of dwarf cornel or partridge berries, which were spread out everywhere along their first trail, had lost their pure alabaster and had begun to set bunches of green berries. The beautiful purple Noah's ark

and the large gorgeous pink moccasins were no longer conspicuous in damp shady swamps, and most of the fragrant little twin-flowers or Linnæas, had faded.

In wet, mossy bogs the curious pitcher-plants began to raise their dark-purple, drooping heads, each flower rising on a long stalk from a whorl of water-filled, pitcher-shaped leaves, which remained half-hidden in cushions of pale spongy moss.

In sunny places the luscious wild strawberries lay, dark red and dead ripe, on the ground, and even the raspberries were rapidly changing from green to red.

The small trees of the pin cherry or bird cherry were loaded with glossy crimson fruit, while shad-bushes or Juneberries were bent with an abundance of black or dark-blue fruit, inviting both birds and bears to a midsummer feast.

Even the blueberries, the most abundant fruit of the North woods, began in places to show dark among the low green vines. While Dan worked hard on the canoe, Harry had no

trouble in providing an abundance of delicious desserts for the camp table; he also caught many fine-flavored black bass, trout and pike for the more substantial part of their meals. If the brothers had not been bent on serious business, nothing could have been more enjoyable than to remain in this delightful camp all summer and enjoy the bounty of wild nature.

The summer was one of those rare seasons when every wild bush and vine offers a bonanza crop to whosoever will harvest and eat. Rare years they are indeed, and generally they follow one of those lean years when the black bear cannot find pickings for a mouthful of blueberries, where in a normal year he filled his capacious paunch and he has to den up with only a thin coat of fat under his coat of fur. In those years of starvation the failure of wild crops may be so complete that the gray squirrel stores basswood twigs instead of butternuts and black walnuts, and the little reds and the chipmunks go into winter-quarters short on hazel nuts and acorns, and early

in spring they have to eat the buds and young shoots of the oaks instead of acorns.

But in the fat years, when no late frost kills the blossoms and when neither too much rain nor drought injures growth, every wild plant from the secluded dewberry to the giant oaks and pines is loaded with some kind of fruit or seeds. From the time the obscure little snails and slugs begin to sample the strawberries, until the bears gorge themselves on blueberries, chokecherries and acorns, and the wild ducks dive and dabble for the wild rice, nature sets her table with a lavish hand. It was in one of these fat seasons that the boys had to make camp on Long Lake.

"Keep at it, kid," Dan encouraged Harry. "Gather all the berries you can find and dry them in the sun. They will begin to taste mighty good about the first of September. The wild rice marshes look mighty fine too, with their pollen-laden tassels. In September, we'll add a sack of rice to our stock. Wild rice and dried berries will go mighty well with fish and game."

"How long do you expect to be on this trip, anyway, Dan?"

"Heaven only knows, Harry. If we don't get along faster than we have been going, we may cruise about for a year. Are you homesick and tired of it?"

"Not a bit of it. But I wish we could send word to Father and Mother; they'll be worried about us."

"We'll send down word to them as soon as we get to our Chippewa friend, Amigoosheb, on Pigeon River. I want to see him, anyway. He may know something about Silver Island, because he and Hamigeesek were always close friends.

"You can gather berries and explore the woods while I work on the canoe, but look out you don't get lost. Take the pup with you; he'll lead you back to camp."

CHAPTER XI

THE CLIMB TO THE EAGLE'S NEST

ON his excursions around the lake Harry made many interesting discoveries. One day he came to camp in great excitement.

"Dan," he said, "I've found an eagle's nest, a hundred feet up in a big pine; it's as big as our tent. Come along, I want to see what's in it."

"Why didn't you climb the tree?"

"I'm afraid to, alone. The old eagles were sailing around it and screaming."

"They won't hurt you."

"Oh, yes. You're kidding me again. You said the moose wouldn't fight either. I don't believe you any more."

Dan smiled and went along.

The nest was a big structure built of sticks as big as a boy's arm.

"You can't climb that pine," said Dan; "it's too big around, and there is nothing to take hold of."

"I'm not going to. I'm going to climb that spruce twenty feet away and then take a peep across to the nest. Just come and give me a boost."

After Harry reached the branches of the spruce he went up quickly.

"You shoot the eagles if they start to fight me," he called, as the big birds came circling lower and lower, uttering their long shrill screams.

At last, when Harry had nearly reached the top of the spruce, one of the great birds with a dull rush of its wings, spread as far as the arms of a man, circled within twenty feet of the scared boy. But just as Dan was going to shoot, the big bird sailed quietly away across the lake, and she and her mate watched the nest from a tall dead pine.

"Golly," cried Harry, "there are three young in it as big as hens; they're just getting feathers! It's the biggest nest I ever

saw. It's almost flat, and so big I could lie down on it!

"They've got a big fish in the nest! One of them is going to eat him. No, he isn't either. I guess he isn't hungry!

"Oh, Dan, you ought to come up here! Gee, I can see a hundred lakes. It's great, Dan! It's the greatest thing I ever saw. Away back where we came from and a way ahead where we are going I can see a long string of lakes. The water looks just like silver."

On the way back to camp, the inquisitive small boy asked many questions about eagles, and Dan told him what he knew.

"These are bald eagles, as shown by the white heads and white tails of the old birds. They use the same nest for many years, perhaps as long as they live, maybe fifty years. They live mostly on fish and come north as soon as the lakes are open and stay here until it freezes up. If a storm has damaged their nest they repair it, and every year they add some more sticks to it. The young stay

about two months in the nest, and never return to the country where they were raised. What becomes of them is hard to tell. I guess most of them get killed by some fool gunners who think they are great heroes when they can shoot a silly young eagle. Some get caught in steel traps. I know of a trapper who had caught a fox, and an eagle swooped down and tore the fox all to pieces."

At every meal the boys had much fun with a flock of whisky-jacks or Canada jays. As soon as Harry's camp-fire began to smoke the jays appeared and waited anxiously for bits of meat and fish to be thrown to them. In spite of Dan's warning, Harry conceived and carried out an original plan of taming them which worked even better than he had intended. He pegged down a piece of venison about ten feet from the camp-fire, and the jays came to it at once. When they tried in vain to fly off with the piece, they took a few hasty bites out of it and left. Then Harry went and moved the piece a little nearer to the camp-fire. After he had repeated this maneuver

several times, the jays grew so bold that they took the food out of the boy's hands, and frequently when the fire was low or Harry was not looking, the jays stole the meat out of the frying-pan. If Harry left any venison exposed they pecked at it or carried it away; even in the tent they examined everything and acted in every respect as if the whole camp belonged to them.

"These jays," observed Dan, "in their gray coats and whitish hoods, remind me of holy old monks, but they have Old Nick in them. You can tame some more at our next camp, Harry."

"They're surely pesky fresh," Harry admitted, "but I don't care. I wish some more birds were as tame as these whisky-jacks.

"Why're they called whisky-jacks, Dan?"

"It's a corruption from Chippewa, I guess. They have a bunch of other names like, moose bird, meat bird, camp thief and lumber-jack.

"They are queer birds all right. Instead of nesting in summer they build their nests in the evergreens when the woods are still

full of snow and when the weather often falls below zero."

While Harry had a fine time sleeping as long as he liked, and exploring the woods in company with Waggles, Dan's mind was not so free from care. He often wondered if it had really been Le Noir who had been following them and how much he knew of their plans and just what his design might be. In order to throw the probable spy entirely off the track, Dan decided not to hurry building the canoe. He worked in a place where he had a clear view of the lake, but where he could not be easily observed from the lake.

Sometimes, when Harry and Waggles had gone on a trip and Dan was working away by himself, a feeling of despair overcame him. "Of all places in the world to find a certain small island this country of a thousand lakes and as many islands is certainly the worst that could be imagined," he thought.

The question of the route they were to take to Lake Superior he also often debated in his mind. Should they take the easy passage

down the Brule River, or should they portage over the divide into the Pigeon River. On the Pigeon River route they would have to make a long and hard portage of eight miles past the rapids and the great falls of the Pigeon.

He decided in favor of the Pigeon River route so he could have a talk with Amigoosheb about the location of Silver Island.

"With the information we have now," he said to himself, "we are just about going it blind."

But when Waggles and Harry returned to camp all gloom was dispelled.

As for Waggles, he lived in a real dog paradise. For hours at a time he would sit barking and whining at a red squirrel, high up in a tree. At other times he chased rabbits or dug for mice until his face and ears were covered with dirt and his nose was stuffed up with the dark brown humus. He never caught anything bigger than mice, but he hunted with such optimistic enthusiasm as if to say to the boys: "You can laugh at me

all you want to, some day I will catch something big."

When he did not happen to be hunting something, Dan or Harry had to throw sticks for him, which he retrieved and shook and threw about with angry growls as if they were rats.

And even when he lay flat on his side, asleep on the soft moss, he furnished no little amusement for the boys, for at those times he often lived over the events of the day in his dreams. He wiggled his feet, wrinkled his face and barked through his nose until the laughter or talk of the boys woke him up.

At the end of a week Dan had his canoe finished and had also smoked the meat of another small buck.

Harry had kept his promise of making himself useful. He had gathered a peck each of raspberries and Juneberries, and had also smoked a dozen fine black bass and wall-eyed pike, and once more the boys and Waggles continued along that most wonderful chain of lakes which forms the international boundary between Minnesota and Ontario.

CHAPTER XII

CAUGHT IN A FOREST FIRE

THE route of the canoeists now became much more difficult. The string of small and somewhat narrow lakes along which they traveled are connected by wild rapids and falls, sending their waters toward Lake of the Woods.

Around these rapids and falls the canoe and the packs had to be carried and as Harry was not strong enough to carry a heavy load they had to make two trips past every rapid, and their progress was rather slow.

As they traveled they kept a sharp lookout for islets that might answer the description of the one Hamigeesek had discovered. Some answered the description fairly well, but not one showed, as far as the boys could see, any traces of precious metal.

Twice they saw parties of Indians return-

ing from the trading-post at Grand Portage, but the Indians did not discover them, and of white men they saw no indication, although they kept a sharp lookout for them and observed about their own camping places the same secrecy they had adopted at the beginning of their journey.

The season had turned very dry, which had the good result that the boys were not troubled by mosquitoes.

"We struck it mighty fine," observed Dan. "The last time I was out here it rained nearly every other day, so that every little hollow was full of stagnant water and the mosquitoes were so thick that it was impossible to sit around the camp-fire for half an hour. I had to crawl into the tent as soon as I had eaten my supper and close the tent mosquito-tight. Every time I was awake I could hear the mosquitoes singing outside, trying to get in. If I left a little hole anywhere the tent was full of them inside of half an hour."

On account of the drought the boys had to be exceedingly careful with their camp-fires.

If possible, they built them on the sand or in a wet place. If that could not be done, they scraped away the dry humus as much as possible, and when they left the camp poured plenty of water on the fire to make sure that it would not start again and spread into the woods.

As the days passed, one much like the other, the brothers began to have a feeling that they had been on this journey for a long, long time, because much of the life in the forest had changed since they started. The birds were entirely silent, in fact it sometimes seemed as if they all had deserted the woods. Overhead they frequently saw a number of fish-hawks sailing at a great height above the water, and occasionally they saw one with folded wings shoot into the lake and rise with a wriggling fish in his talons. They passed several of the large nests of the fish-hawks, placed conspicuously on tall, dead trees not far from the water, but the nests were deserted, as the young birds were already on the wing, learning to catch fish as instinct and

the example of their parents taught them.

When the boys started with their new canoe, a dreamy blue haze seemed to hang over the lake. From day to day this haze thickened until at the end of a week the air was filled with the pungent odor of smoke.

"I shouldn't be surprised," said Dan, "if we'd run into a forest fire. I haven't seen such a dry season for a long time."

"I don't see how a forest fire could get started, Dan, if everybody is careful with his camp-fire."

"The trouble is they aren't. A fire may smolder in the muck or peat for weeks or even for months, and when the season gets very dry and a heavy wind springs up the dry and hot air will fan the smoldering peat into a blaze and you have the beginning of a forest fire which nothing but a big lake or a heavy rain can stop."

The haze and smoke thickened from day to day until it lay over the lakes like fog and made traveling difficult because the boys could only see a short ways ahead, while the view

of shores and lakes was completely shut off. After they had slowly picked their way for several days through this oppressive haze of smoke they camped for Sunday on a small island. Both climbed a tall tree to see if they could discover any fire close by. But they could see little more from the tree tops; the whole world just seemed to be wrapped up in a blanket of dense, pungent smoke.

During the night conditions did not change much, however, in the morning the boys thought the smoke was less dense. But Dan told Harry that forest fires always sort of went down at night because the air was cool and damp, and that they burned most furiously during the hot and windy hours of noon.

As the day grew warmer the thickness of the smoke increased again, and towards noon it became almost suffocating.

"Can't we get away from here?" Harry asked. "I'm almost choking."

"No, we can't," replied Dan. "I'm afraid if we moved now we might literally run from the frying-pan into the fire. If the wind does

not grow heavier the fire is not likely to jump the channel and get on this island."

But in the early hours of the afternoon the wind did increase with the heat of the day and the approach of the fire. At last a loud roaring crackle could be heard across the channel. A lurid glare lighted up the rolling, dark clouds of smoke, and pieces of burning, dead twigs and sticks were driven before the wind like great sparks, while great masses of flame shot out from the tree tops and were lashed by the storm half-way across the channel.

"Great heavens!" exclaimed Dan. "Don't lose me now, Harry. The blaze will be on us in a minute. Grab everything you can and carry it out on the sand point."

Dan first ran with the canoe out to the long sandy point under the lee of the island. Then he pulled up the tent in a hurry, grabbed the gun and the blankets and carried them out to the canoe. In the meantime Harry had carried their meat and other eatables to the same spot. The deafening roar and crackle came

nearer and nearer, and as they ran with their last load to the canoe, the whole island was in a blaze and burning sparks, small burning brush and twigs were falling all around them and the smoke almost stifled the boys as they stumbled along in the scorching heat.

"Are we going to burn up?" gasped Harry, badly frightened.

But Dan either did not hear him or had no time to answer. He tipped the canoe on its side, soaked the tent and the blankets in the lake, and hurriedly threw them over the canoe.

"Now get under there," he said, as he grabbed Harry by his shirt cloth, "and get down flat. This ought to keep us alive."

For half an hour the fire roared and crackled in the tall pines, spruces and balsams of the island, and the boys had to keep their faces close to the ground so as not to be suffocated by the dense volume of smoke which came not only from the island but from the burning and burnt country behind. The fire had not been merely a light running ground fire, which kills the undergrowth and burns

the needles around the thick-barked trunks of the big old pines, but it had grown into a destructive crown fire, which leaves the green forest a black waste of desolation.

The night following proved to be the most miserable the boys had yet spent on their whole trip. They could not go back to the island because dead trunks and stumps and the thick layers of humus were still burning and smoldering. As the August night grew cold, the fury of the fire had spent itself and the smoke grew less oppressive. Although there was fire and smoke all around them, it was with difficulty that the shivering boys got a camp-fire started on the edge of the water with pieces of wood they had picked up in the darkness along the shore. Then they wrung out their wet blankets as well as they could, rolled themselves up in front of the fire, and got what rest and sleep they could after the excitement of the day.

The delay caused by the forest fire made the boys still more eager to travel as fast as possible.

Of Le Noir they had discovered no sign, and they felt sure that he had taken the North Channel around Hunter's Island. Might he not intend to see old Amigoosheb and get more information about Silver Island? Dan knew that he was well acquainted with the old Indian.

"Kid," he said to Harry, "let's go as fast as we can. I am afraid the rogue may beat us to the Pigeon River and steal the information we must have. He's sly enough to do it if he gets half a chance."

CHAPTER XIII

IN THE CHIPPEWA TEPEE

AFTER their escape from the forest fire the boys allowed themselves no rest except on Sundays. But so great is the number of lakes and bays which they felt they had to explore on the route, that the yellowing of ash and birch and the waning of the days told that summer had gone, when at last they reached the tepee of Amigoosheb, near the head of the long portage of the Pigeon River.

It was late on a cold and rainy afternoon when Dan looked into the tepee of his Indian friend, who was sitting inside of his lodge, resting after an all-day hunting trip, while Anego, his wife, was preparing a feast for the family. Amigoosheb, when he saw the two whites, arose from his seat, shook the hands of his visitors and bade them to be

seated on a bearskin behind the fire opposite the tepee entrance which is considered the seat of honor in a Chippewa lodge.

"You are welcome," he said. "I have killed a fat deer and the meat will soon be ready for a feast."

Harry was surprised to see that Amigoosheb was half a head taller than his big brother, but he liked the kindly face of the big red hunter and felt at once at home in the warm, cozy tepee.

Anego did not speak to the boys, but handed each of the lads a pair of dry and soft moosehide moccasins, and the boys were glad to take off their wet and heavy boots.

"It's mighty good to see some people again," Harry remarked as he tied his moccasins. "It seems to me we have camped and traveled alone for a year."

Having divested themselves of their wet boots and coats, the boys enjoyed the comfort of the red man's wigwam. The rain had increased from a drizzle to one of those steady downpours which it seemed would soak every

"You are welcome."—*Page 110.*

leaf, sprig and root in the North woods. But the shower of rain which came through the smoke-hole of the roof had no visible effect on the bright and cheerful fire in Amigoosheb's lodge, because Anego was a good housewife and had provided plenty of dry wood which did not sizzle and smoke like the wood of a lazy and shiftless squaw. In fact, as the countless little drops and currents, like a myriad of invisible spirit fingers, played their soft murmuring music on the birch-bark roof of the tepee, the fire seemed to grow brighter and more cheerful. The kettle of venison boiled lustily and Harry wondered why white men did not live in tepees where there was none of the bustle of the cross and overworked mother from which he had sometimes fled in Detroit.

Their host sat in silence and seemed absorbed in thought, while Dan told of their trip, about which Amigoosheb seemed to show no curiosity, for he only uttered occasional grunts and brief remarks, and Harry remembered that it is contrary to Indian etiquette

to ask guests any questions about their business.

When the meat was done, Amigoosheb placed a chunk of it in the bowl of each one present and then poured a quantity of broth over it. The boys used their own tin bowls, knives, forks and spoons, but their Chippewa hosts held the meat in their fingers and drank the broth.

The meal over, Waggles and the two mongrel dogs of the Indians received the bones which they ate outside the tepee. Amigoosheb and his son resumed their seats and entertained their guests, and now asked the news about the parents of the boys and about the Indians and half-breeds they knew at Fort Frances, while Anego and her two young girls were busy putting the tepee in shape for the night.

Some hours after the darkness of a rainy night had settled over the forest, the Indians, as is their custom, pulled their blankets over their heads and lay down to sleep. Harry and Dan covered themselves with their own

blankets and stretched out on a bear-skin rug.

"It's bully to be a real Indian," thought Harry, as he listened to the soft patter of the rain and heard the weird call of two loons as they passed over the tent, and then he fell into forgetfulness as complete as that of Waggles who lay coiled up near the softly glowing fire.

Although Dan knew well the inbred aversion of an Indian to do anything in a hurry, he himself was so impatient to be off in search of the object of their journey that he could not spend much time in a leisurely visit with the family of Amigoosheb, but on the following day told his host of the purpose of his and Harry's visit.

Amigoosheb was much interested in the story Dan had to tell and he and his wife sincerely mourned the death of Hamigeesek and Sellsby.

"They were both good and brave men," he said. "Long ago, Hamigeesek went on the war-path against the Sioux and brought home

three scalps, but when he became a Christian he buried the scalps. He never drank fire-water and once when I was sick and starving, he traveled three days on snowshoes and brought me moose meat and tea and I got well and strong again.

"I saw the white metal Hamigeesek found. He brought it from a little island in the great Lake Gitchegumee, under the breast of a sitting crane."

"Under the breast of a sitting crane?" Dan ventured to ask. "What did he mean by that?"

"He did not say," Amigoosheb continued after a brief silence. "Perhaps he meant another island or a long back of rock. There are as many of those on the shore of the great lake and on the island of Minong as there are moose and deer in the forest. But I do not know; I did not ask him."

"Had Hamigeesek been to the Isle of Minong, Isle Royale, as we call it?" Dan followed up eagerly.

"Yes, he had been there. He told of the

thick brush that covers the island and of the gulls, the ravens, and eagles that live there. No white men live there, and few Indians ever visit the island because they are afraid of the storms and fogs and of the great waves on the big lake."

"My little brother and I must go there, Amigoosheb. We must find the little island. Will you help us to carry our packs and our canoe over the long portage? We need a friend now, for the back of my little brother is not strong enough for a great burden."

CHAPTER XIV

AN UNWELCOME VISITOR

AMIGOOSHEB promised to carry their canoe over the long trail. "To-morrow," he said, "when the sun goes down, you shall see the shining waters of Gitchegumee, the Big Lake."

Dan was jubilant and Harry danced with joy and could hardly keep from shouting when Dan told him that they were to camp in sight of the great Lake Superior the next night.

But that evening as the boys and their hosts were seated around the fire in the tepee waiting for supper, something happened which changed their whole plan.

Waggles, who apparently lay asleep near the fire, raised his head and listened to some noise. His nostrils quivered for a second or two, and then he bolted out of the lodge

with his hair bristling and uttering an angry growl. The two Indian dogs rushed after him and then there was a commotion of three dogs barking and snarling as if they were having a fight with a bear.

The two white boys sprang out of the tepee while their Indian hosts followed more leisurely. And there stood Le Noir, shouting and kicking at the dogs who sprang at him viciously again and again as if he were a wild beast which they would tear to pieces. Waggles was so furious that he did not heed Dan's and Harry's calls until Harry grabbed him by the neck and tore him away.

"You keep some savage brutes in your tepee, Amigoosheb," remarked Le Noir, when at last the dogs had been quieted.

"It's the little tail-wagger of my friend that started it," replied Amigoosheb quietly. "He heard and smelled you first. My dogs are friendly with nearly all visitors."

Amigoosheb and Dan spoke very little, as hosts and guests sat around the fire in the tepee, but Le Noir was talkative. He ex-

pressed surprise at meeting Dan and Harry and said he had not heard that they had left Fort Frances to visit Amisgoosheb.

He told how he had started from Fort Frances less than a week ago and had made a quick trip of it through the North Channel around Hunter's Island. He was looking, he said, for a good country to trap beaver, a country not so much overrun by trappers as the region around Fort Frances. He had heard that beaver were numerous north of the Pigeon River and he was on his way to explore this region, and if he found it good he meant to trap there all winter. But as he knew that his friend Amigoosheb generally made his summer camp at this place, he had wished to visit him for a few days.

Amigoosheb thought beaver ought to be plentiful up north because the Indians had not trapped much in that country during the last few years on account of the low prices the traders had been offering for beaver skins.

As soon as Dan could see Amigoosheb alone

next day, he told him what he suspected to be the real cause for the appearance of Le Noir, and that he had previously seen Waggles act just as he did last night to Le Noir, only Le Noir was able to get away without being discovered.

"I am convinced," continued Dan, "that he has been following us and intends to follow us on our whole trip. We put him on the wrong trail at Hunter's Island, but now he's found us again and we'll have a hard time to lose him.

"If we find the island he will claim a share of it."

For a minute Amigoosheb smoked in silence. Then with a peculiar gleam in his dark eyes, he began in Chippewa: "Le Noir is a bad man; he is not my friend. He will not claim a share of the white silver; he will want it all. If he is there when you see the shine of the sun on the white metal, he will murder you if he can. Then he will sink your dead body in the deep lake which never gives up its dead, and you and your little brother

and the tail-wagging dog and your canoe will never be seen again." And once more he smoked in silence, while only his eyes, which seemed to be piercing something at a distance, showed that some strong feeling was working within him.

"Never trust him," he resumed after a while, "and do not spare him if you ever get your right hand on his throat; an evil spirit dwells within him. But I fear him not, because I can read his black thoughts, and if you will follow my plan, I think we can send him north where his false tongue said his feet intended to go.

"But we must not hurry; we must be patient. If we are impatient he will read our thoughts and will follow you to the Isle of Minong."

CHAPTER XV

CUNNING AGAINST CUNNING

FOR several days the native cunning of Amigoosheb fought a silent battle with the shrewdness of the half-breed; although apparently Amigoosheb thought only of entertaining his guests after the manner of his red fathers. As there was plenty of game and fish in camp, both guests and hosts made a feast every day—Indians have no regular time for meals—and spent much time in smoking and telling stories. Amigoosheb knew wonderful tales of hunting the big moose, the fierce timber wolves, and the hated wolverine; he was also well versed in the traditions and legends of the Chippewa nation. Le Noir had taken part in the fights and intrigues of the rival fur companies, and Dan could talk by the hour about Detroit and Boston.

Harry drank it all in and wished that he and Dan and Waggles might have some real narrow escapes on this trip.

"As long as all three of us just get out alive, it's all bully fine," he thought.

Twice Amigoosheb took his guests to a fine stream, where the speckled trout were so numerous and so hungry that they bit wildly on small pieces of red flannel. Amigoosheb did not fish, for fishing, according to his idea, was work for women, small boys and white men, but not for a dignified Chippewa brave.

It was on one of these fishing trips that the wily Indian managed to be alone with Dan without arousing the suspicion of Le Noir, and unfolded to him a plan of outwitting the half-breed.

"To-morrow or next day, I must go moose hunting," he proceeded. "We need meat, and Anego needs moose hide for moccasins. It's a long trail, too long for your little brother. You stay here and hunt deer close by. My boy, Magwah, goes with you.

"Le Noir goes with me. We find moose, I make the moose a little wild. I tell Le Noir he can't get him. Le Noir thinks he is a great hunter and wants to get the big moose. We follow him and get lost. We travel around and find many beavers and stay away six or seven sleeps.

"My boy, Magwah, is big and strong. He will help you carry the canoe over the long portage, and you paddle away to the great island of Minong and find the Island of the White Metal and I pray that the Great Manitou will guide your paddles and make your eyes keen.

"I have spoken. What does the son of my friend think of Amigoosheb's plan?"

"It is a good plan," Dan assented warmly. "But the season is so far advanced now that I fear that the snowstorms and the ice will make us prisoners on Minong if we go now and our father and mother will think that the great cold lake has swallowed us."

"I will send word to your father and I will send you a message to Minong."

"How can you send us a message to Minong?"

"If you have not come back when the days and nights are equal, I will go to Tabahta, the island white men call Pie Island. It is high, and plenty of trees grow on it. With big trunks and many green boughs I shall make a big black smoke which you can see on Minong if the day is clear. If the gray fog hides the shores of Minong, I shall wait till the sun melts it away."

"What will the smoke tell us?" asked Dan eagerly.

"One big smoke will say: 'All is well. Le Noir has gone to trap beaver.' Two smokes will say: 'Le Noir is on your trail. Thrust your hunting-knife into his black heart or pierce it with a bullet.'

"When you see my message, you will make one big smoke on Minong opposite Pie Island. It will say to me: 'I have read your message.'"

"That's a fine plan," Dan broke in, his eyes flashing and his heart beating fast.

"But what will you do if you don't get an answer?"

"I shall build a wigwam on Greenstone Point of Pie Island. I shall stay till the same moon comes around again and I shall send up one or two big smokes on every day my eyes can see the dark shore of Minong."

"Shall we find meat on Minong? I do not know the great island," Dan inquired.

"The streams and lakes and the bays of Minong are full of fish, and in the forest runs Wahbooson, the rabbit, and the lynx crouches in the thickets, and Ahtik, the antlered caribou, travels on the marshes and ridges. You have a gun and traps and should find plenty of meat.

"If you have not returned and feasted with your friends when the summer days are longest, I shall again make smokes on Tabahta. If I do not see your smokes before the same moon returns to the summer forest, I shall know that the great sea has swallowed you, and Anego will weep for you and I shall go and tell your father that his sons were brave,

that they have fought the big waves of the sea and that they will not come back to the Lake-of-Much-Rain."

"We will go, Amigoosheb," said Dan with a hearty handshake and a quaver in his voice, "and may the God of the white man bless you for the friendship you have shown us."

CHAPTER XVI

INTO THE UNKNOWN

A FEW days later Amigoosheb and Le Noir started northward for a moose hunt, while Dan, Harry, and Magwah went to bring in a deer they had killed the day before.

Amigoosheb went out of his way several miles, ostensibly to see the deer, but in reality to convince Le Noir that this story about the deer was not a ruse, although Le Noir had not uttered a word of suspicion.

The meat having been brought home, the three lads lost no time starting on the trail down the Pigeon River, the falls and rapids of which thundered and rushed with a wildness and magnificence more impressive than anything Harry had ever seen.

Although no wind was stirring, when toward evening they reached Lake Superior,

big rolling waves were running from northeast to southwest, and white-capped breakers were dashing against the high steep shore, pounding it with big angular rocks as with gigantic sledge hammers, and in the little cove, near which the boys had camped, the incoming waves pushed the pebbly shingle back and forth, back and forth, all night with a dull grinding sound.

"Oh, Dan!" exclaimed Harry. "I'm afraid to go out on that lake! It looks as big as the ocean, and the waves smash against the cliffs like a thousand pile-drivers. And the water smells terribly cold."

"Almost any boy would be scared of Lake Superior," was Dan's quieting remark, "when the waves run high. But you ought to see the lake in a real storm!

"Let's go out on that point and I will show you something.

"Do you see those rocks as big as cabins, lying below the cliff? Waves and frost broke them off. In the next big storm the waves will lift them up and dash them into smaller

rocks, or during winter, frost and ice will split them and then the waves grind the small rocks down to flat, rounded pebbles, and rub the pebbles back and forth and make clay and fine sand out of them.

"That's the way the waves and storms have worked ever since the big basin was filled."

"And how deep is it?" Harry wanted to know.

"A thousand feet in the deepest places. It goes down three or four hundred feet below the level of the ocean."

"But what keeps it so terribly cold all summer?"

"You know the summers are short in this country and the snow lies deep and long in the forests. Most of the water that runs into the lake is as cold as ice water, and the lake is so deep that the waves can't stir it all and the sun can't shine to the bottom."

"Can't you ever take a swim in it, Dan?"

"No, not in the open lake. Its water is always clear and cool and fine to drink just as you dip it out, but for swimming it feels

like ice water. But you can try it if you want to."

"Not I. It scares me to look at it and I can smell that it's as cold as ice."

"In warm, calm weather," Dan explained, "you can swim in the little basins and coves cut off from the lake. In these the sun reaches the bottom and warms the water, but in a storm the cold waves run over all of them."

Isle Royale, for which the lads peered eagerly southeastward, although often dimly visible on the horizon, was now invisible on account of a bluish haze, of which it was hard to tell whether it consisted of water vapor or of a thin smoke from distant forest fires.

Magwah, who was in no hurry to return, stayed with the boys overnight, and during the cold evening, all three of them wrapped in blankets like Indians, sat around the campfire and speculated on the whereabout of Amigoosheb and Le Noir, and wondered what Le Noir would do when he returned to the Pigeon

River and learned that Dan and Harry had given him the slip.

"How will you know, Magwah," asked Harry, "whether Le Noir follows us or not?" as an hour later the boys lay rolled up in their tent, listening to the heavy thuds and splashes of the breakers and to the dull grinding of the pebbles.

"Father and I have tracked moose and foxes and deer," the Indian boy answered with a laugh; "a man with a canoe cannot creep into a hole in the bank like shaung-washa, the gliding mink."

It was not until the second morning that the swell had gone down enough for the two brothers to make a dash for Isle Royale.

"We might as well head her east-north-east," said Dan, as they had gotten clear of the rocks, "so as to strike a point about in the middle of Isle Royale opposite Pie Island.

"It's a good twenty-mile stretch, Harry, so let's keep up a steady thrust, the longer we are on the open lake, the greater the

chance of running into a squall or a fog, which is no fun on this big body of water."

When they were a few miles out, they found the swell still much stronger than they had expected, but as the waves did not run choppy and white-capped, it was great fun to steer their light canoe, bobbing up and down over the broad crests and through the wide troughs.

Not until they were within six miles of Minong, which had been plainly in sight for some time like a long line of dark high forest, did they encounter any real danger and difficulty.

For half an hour they had seen a mass of gray approaching from the northeast, and before the two bold sailors quite realized what was going to happen, they were so completely shut in by one of the dreaded fogs of the great Northern lake that they could scarcely see fifty yards around them. At the same time they ran into a stretch of more choppy waves, although there was no strong wind.

"Now, keep at it, little brother, keep at it!

The sooner we get out of this the better. I'll steer her by the wind and by compass. If it doesn't get stormy we'll make it; but six miles in a fog is a blamed long stretch."

CHAPTER XVII

BATTLING WITH WAVES AND FOG

IT was a long stretch. Little Harry worked at the paddle until his arms felt like strings of sore and bleeding muscles, and his aching back made him think that he could not sit upright much longer.

In the bottom of the boat, behind a pack, lay Waggles, shivering. Up and down, up and down bobbed the light craft. Now and then a little cold spray sprang over the bow or gunwale, the fog was getting denser and changing into a cold chilling mist, which was creeping through their clothes and chilling their flesh like ice.

"Aren't we ever going to get there?" asked Harry. "It seems to me we've been paddling a whole day!"

"We're about half through the fog, I guess. Better go a little slower now."

"How do you know where we are, Dan?"

"I don't know it. I'm guessing at it."

"I—I'm scared, Dan! I—I—think—we've plumb missed the whole island," Harry at last relieved himself, shivering with cold. "We're lost, and we'll drown. It's getting dark now!"

"Oh, rot! Harry," replied Dan. "We're not lost and we can't miss the island because it's forty miles long. We're still headed east-northeast and will surely strike it. I could steer us to Isle Royale by the wind even if I had no compass."

But even while saying these words, Dan turned the canoe almost southeast. They surely had been going a long time. It couldn't possibly be evening yet, and still it seemed to be getting dark as Harry claimed. The bobbing and swinging needle of the compass lying before him was almost useless, and he had really been steering by the wind. Perhaps the wind had slowly shifted northward and he had been steering along half-way between the mainland and Isle Royale! The

waves were getting bigger too. If darkness and a storm should catch them in this dangerous channel, they would never see another sunrise.

"Get down in the bottom and roll up in a blanket!" he gruffly ordered Harry; "so you get warm. You're shivering just like the pup!"

"I won't do it, Dan. I'll paddle as long as you're paddling. I'll not crawl away like a baby!" retorted Harry, almost choking with tears, and Dan did not insist; but he spent a bad half hour wondering where he was and what he should do if the impenetrable darkness of a foggy night overtook them before they found land.

Under the spur of this anxiety his muscular arms seemed to double their strength, and, with the paddle bending at every long stroke, he fairly sent the light craft shooting along in the troughs or on the ridges of the long black swells which rose and fell mysteriously under the all-enveloping gray mist.

Straight southeast he drove the bow. He

forgot that he was drenched to the skin, his powerful frame became pervaded by a feeling of warmth, and the sweat of his forehead mingled with the drizzle of the thickening mist which his large blue eyes vainly sought to pierce.

With growing anxiety he strained his ears to catch some faint sound from the land which must be near now, unless—he feared to finish the thought—yes, unless by some error in judgment or trick of the elements, he had been steering along in mid-channel, parallel to the straight rocky shore of Minong. But even the acute hearing of a trained hunter could detect no sound of hope. Small combers seethed on the crests of the swells and broke with monotonous splashings against the side or the bow of the canoe,—foreboding sounds of desolation on a fog-shrouded waste.

On and on they labored in silence. There, what was that? Dan held his paddle and listened. Yes, there was no mistake. A faint sound of the piercing scream of gulls

dead ahead! Dan gave a shout and almost sprang up in the boat.

"Hear the gulls, Harry, the gulls!" he cried. "We are near land!"

Louder and louder grew the screams, and the lads slackened their speed so as not to wreck the boat on concealed rocks.

The cries of the gulls became deafening, but to the two brothers no song of thrush or whitethroat had ever sounded so joyously sweet.

Now they passed close by a small rocky island, white with hundreds of gulls, and rising like a small iceberg out of the black lake and the fog.

"We can't be more than a mile from Isle Royale," Dan rejoiced.

"Steady now, the coast of Minong in some places is strewn with reefs and small islands.

"Give a yell, Harry. The echo will tell us when we get close to land."

Again and again Harry shouted at the top of his voice.

Now the echo came back, through the fog.

ON AND ON THEY LABORED IN SILENCE.—*Page 137.*

Faint at first, but growing louder every minute, and then a wall of solid rock crowned with trees and bushes, suddenly thrust itself out of the fog, scarcely twenty yards ahead of them.

"Thank God!" cried Dan, with barely controlled emotion, "there's Minong, the royal island! No land ever looked quite so good to me!"

CHAPTER XVIII

THE FIRST CAMP ON ISLE ROYALE

HARRY wanted to make camp on a narrow strip of sandy beach close to the lake, but Dan pointed to a line on the cliffs fifteen feet above them.

"Do you know why no lichens and mosses grow below that line?" he asked. "Because that's the height to which the waves dash up. If we camp on this beach we might be washed into the lake with our whole outfit."

They carried their equipment up through a wide crevice and selected a sheltered spot behind some spruces for a camp site. Their canoe they deposited in the crevice, well above the reach of the waves.

While Harry made supper, consisting of hot tea, big chunks of broiled venison and hardtack, Dan set up their small A tent, and cut a lot of firewood for the night. For their

tea he brought out a small bag of brown sugar which thus far he had concealed from Harry.

It was not until they sat down to supper that the boys became aware of how hungry, wet and cold they were; but the sweet hot tea and the juicy venison at once revived their spirits and their energy.

"It's going to get dark early," said Dan when he had finished his share of the meat. "Let's put our camp in shape at once and then get into some dry clothes."

So Harry washed the dishes and cut a lot of balsam boughs which he dried near the fire before he spread them out for their bed.

Dan cut two large back logs of green poplar and then cut two green birch trees into lengths of about three feet.

He selected the green poplar for back logs because he knew that the abundant sap in green poplar would keep the logs from burning through too quickly.

In front of the back logs, facing the open tent, he soon had going a warm steady fire of green birch chunks which filled the tent

with a warm ruddy glow and took the chill and dampness out of things.

"Dan, this is the swellest camp I've ever been in," Harry exclaimed, when everything was in shape and the boys had put on dry clothes and moccasins.

"I wish Father and Mother and sister were here now. I could listen all night to you and Father telling stories.

"Why didn't we ever make such a camp before?"

"You don't need a back-log fire on a hot summer night, but on a cold autumn night it's the only thing to make a camp warm and cozy, especially when a man is wet and chilled clear to his bones as we were in that horrible, cold fog."

"Why didn't you cut up some dead and dry wood?" Harry wanted to know.

"You need dry wood for cooking, but for a back-log fire it burns too fast. We want this fire to keep going all night, and I don't believe I care to get up and feed it more than twice."

"But why did you hunt around for birch; what's the matter with spruce or balsam?"

"All the evergreens contain resin and burn too fast. They also make a lot of smoke and leave no good bed of coal."

"What about green oak and poplar?"

"They are good for back logs, but for fuel they burn too slowly. You'd get no heat out of them and they might even go out if they weren't piled up right. Dry oak is good, but it's too hard to cut. Birch and hard maple are the best in this country. Hickory and beech are fine, but I feel sure we shall not find them on Isle Royale."

By the time the boys were ready to go to sleep, the wind had freshened and had veered around to the northwest and the fog and mist had changed to a cold drizzling autumn rain.

Harry stepped out of the tent to look around and listen.

"Lord," he exclaimed, "I never saw such black, pitchy darkness! You can't see a thing ten feet from the fire.

"But I can hear the swishing and splash-

ing of the waves. Ugh! I'm mighty glad we aren't out on that big cold lake now!"

"If we were," replied Dan, "we'd probably stay there for good.

"But now let's roll in; to-morrow we start exploring the coast of this big island in dead earnest, and it's not going to be a small and easy job."

CHAPTER XIX

A REMARKABLE DISCOVERY AND A FATEFUL MESSAGE

THEY did not start exploring the coast on the next day. When Dan awoke at dawn of day, the waves pounded and swashed against the brown rocks below the camp, the tops of the spruces were bending in the wind, and low gray clouds, scudding fast before the northwester, poured a fine cold rain over the uninhabited wilderness.

"No trip to-day," he thought. "Mighty fine in this camp on solid ground."

He arose and put some wood on the fire which was almost out.

"Looks like a good day for making up sleep. Doesn't worry us now; let her blow!" and in five minutes he was asleep again.

Several hours later Harry woke up. "Dan," he called, as he still rubbed his eyes,

"wake up! Hear the breakers, and see the rain coming down. It looks like fall, almost like winter. What are we going to do to-day?"

"Nothing, sonny! You may sleep some more."

"Not I," Harry replied, as he sprang up and began to dress. "I slept like a ground-hog, but now I'm as wide-awake as a rabbit. Let's dress and get breakfast. I'm hungry!"

The rain and storm continued all day and the boys had much time to think and talk things over, for exploring the island in this weather was out of the question. In many places the shore was impassable because the pounding waves broke high against the steep cliffs, and on the main body of the island the brush and trees were so laden with rain that a walk of a few rods would have wet the clothing of the boys through and through.

Dan cut up another poplar and a few birches for the camp-fire and some dead spruces for cooking, while Harry went down

the crevice and dipped some water from a pocket in the rock.

Harry wondered if their mother wouldn't worry a good deal about them; "because," he figured, "we've been gone now more than three months, but so many things have happened that it seems a year."

Dan, too, thought that Mother and Margaret would be worried, but he assured Harry, "Father knows that we can take care of ourselves, and he'll tell them not to worry."

"But didn't we have a close call in that fog?" asked Harry.

"Maybe we did, but that's a part of the game, and Father knows that. He's not afraid of taking chances."

"Do you really think," Harry wanted to know, "that the Indians will find out where Le Noir will go when he and Amigoosheb come back from their moose hunt? Won't he give them the slip?"

"Not very likely," Dan replied with a smile. "One will watch the Pigeon River

Portage and the other will watch for him on the Brule, and these are the only two ways he can go if he intends to follow us. He'll most likely come down the Brule, because that's the easiest passage and is farthest away from Amigoosheb's wigwam.

"As for shaking an Indian scout if he's once on your trail, you might as well try to shake your own shadow.

"A Chippewa is a born scout and trailer, and Amigoosheb is the best I ever knew. He would be able to lose Le Noir, but Le Noir will never lose him."

"To tell the truth, Dan, I'm scared of Le Noir. He's got such an ugly look. Aren't you scared of him at all?"

"I might be," Dan admitted, "if he could sneak up on us. But he can't as long as the pup is with us. That's why I took the pup along."

"You did?" exclaimed Harry; "and you never told me! So my pup's good for something anyhow! Wake up, Waggles! D'you hear that?

"But, Dan, would you kill Le Noir if he followed us?"

"I certainly would, before I gave him a chance to kill you or me or the pup!" Dan declared with his jaws set and his eyes flashing.

And Harry thought, "By George! he'll do it," as he watched the face of his big brother.

"You know what I think?" Harry resumed after awhile. "I think we'll starve to death here if winter catches us.

"I haven't seen a sign of deer or rabbit, not even of any small birds. This Isle Royale is sure the wildest place I ever dreamt of."

"There aren't any deer or moose on the island, and rabbits don't hop around much in the rain, and near the coast they stay in the brush. As for birds, I don't expect to see many. The island is too cool and too wet. There aren't enough bugs and berries here to attract many birds. But some birds will come after these wild mountain-ash berries that are so plentiful.

"But you needn't worry about starving. I know there are plenty of rabbits on the island, and where the rabbits are, you'll find plenty of lynx; and we can find caribou, I think. And I know we can catch plenty of fish, so I'm not worrying about starving.

"I am worried about finding Silver Island. If I only knew what Hamigeesek meant by the 'Sitting Crane' and whereabouts it was, I'd feel easier. But as it is, we are hunting for a grouse chick hidden in the brush. You seldom find the grayish-brown, squatting little things until you almost step on them."

After a few days when the weather had cleared and the lake had become calm, the boys paddled northeastward along the shore. They passed numerous small rocky islands above which hundreds of gulls were screaming and soaring, but they discovered no point or headland to which even the picturesque language of the Chippewa could possibly apply the name of Sitting Crane.

On the second morning they entered a long and very narrow bay which ran two miles

into the island, and which Dan, from a crude sketch by Amigoosheb, recognized as McCargo's Cove.

On the shore of this fiord they made a remarkable discovery. For a distance of two miles they found many pits from three to six feet deep, and in the pits they discovered metallic copper in small pieces and veins as if it had grown in the rock, but in a few pits they found sheets of copper over a foot square. These sheets also seemed to have grown in the rock.

Around the pits lay thousands of small boulders worn rough and flat on one end, showing that they had been used as hammers by unknown miners.

But the long lines of pits were not the only discovery the boys made. Near the pits extended long lines of small earth-mounds evidently thrown up by a forgotten race a long time ago.

"What in all the world can these things mean?" both of them asked with wonder; "and when were these pits worked?"

"I never heard the Indians talk about these copper mines," Dan added.

"As to the time past since the pits were worked, we ought to be able to fix that pretty close. Let's cut down one of the biggest trees on the edge of a pit."

When two old gnarly pines had been felled, they counted on one of them about two hundred and fifty rings and on the other over three hundred.

"That means," Dan explained, "that for about three hundred years these mines have not been worked, so it's no wonder the Indians have forgotten about them. Most of their traditions do not go back very far."

"But do you think," asked Harry, whose curiosity was now much aroused, "that a lot of lazy Indians would mine copper? Don't they hate that kind of work?"

"Who else could have done it? No other people ever lived in this country. The Western tribes quit working here for copper when the Eastern tribes came into contact with white men who sold them better and cheaper

metal weapons, knives, and ornaments than they could make with their crude tools from the copper they mined here in their primitive fashion."

"But what about these earth mounds?"

"I don't know, Harry. Let's open one of them."

With two thick balsam poles cut flat at the end, the boys dug into one of the small mounds, but it contained no relics of any kind.

"Dan, this is great sport," Harry broke out as he continued to dig away with his flattened pole. "Let's stay here a week and dig into every mound and pit.

"You know that I just fancy there might be some silver where there's such a lot of copper lying around loose.

"I'm just crazy to know how the Indians dug these pits in the hard rock. May be, Dan, they took away the silver and left the copper, and if we only knew how they dug the pits we could find lots of silver ourselves and wouldn't have to hunt for that island

under the Sitting Crane. We'll never find it anyway, Dan. It's like hunting for a marble you lost on a fishing trip. If we stay here and start mining we'll run a better chance of finding something than we'll have if we chase around looking for that fool island."

And Harry grew almost eloquent as he continued: "Dan, you don't know if that fool island is near by or a hundred miles away. Let's chuck the pesky thing and dig for silver right here. Maybe we'll find gold too.

"I don't believe Amigoosheb knew what he was talking about anyhow. That stuff about an island under the breast of a crane is just rot, Dan, and Hamigeesek has just been stuffing Amigoosheb."

Dan did not try to argue these points with Harry, for he was himself very much interested in these old copper mines, and wondered why the Indians had never told him about them and why they never went there for copper.

"Let's go back and look at some more of

the pits," was all he answered to Harry's long talk.

Several things soon struck the attention of both of the boys; the rock did not look as if it had been broken by heavy hammers and it had surely not been blasted by gunpowder. Besides pieces and veins of copper, small stone hand-hammers and a few pieces of charcoal were the only things of interest they found in all the pits they cleaned out.

Suddenly as Harry picked up another piece of charcoal, Dan exclaimed: "I've got it! I've got it!

"They built a hot fire on the rock and then blasted the heated rock by pouring water on it."

"Hurrah, hurrah!" cried Harry. "Let's try it, Dan; let's try it. I'll bet we'll find something wonderful."

A hot fire was soon blazing on a selected spot. Harry went down to the cove and brought their two small kettles filled with water.

When Dan had raked away the coal, Harry

dashed the water on the rock, while Waggles watched with a half-human curiosity.

"Crack, bing!" went the red-hot rock as soon as the cold water touched it. One piece barely missed Harry's face and another just skimmed clear of the upright tail of Waggles who immediately dropped his flag of good humor to half-mast and hid under a thick spruce bush.

"Great pup! brave pup!" Dan roared with laughter. "Did you see him scoot for the woods, Harry? He thought there was a moose breaking out of the rock!"

Harry, who looked a little pale after setting off his first blast, threw on the second kettleful from a safer distance.

"You needn't always make fun of him," he then defended his dog angrily. "He's not afraid of things he knows.

"I bet you were scared yourself to pour on the water, that's why you let me do it. That's mighty brave of a big fellow like you; it might have killed me."

When Dan just kept laughing, Harry grew

so angry that he started throwing stones at Dan. But Dan stepped behind some trees and merrily called out:

"Three cheers for Harry McCulloch and his dog, Waggles, the great silver miners of Isle Royale!"

When Harry was over his fit of anger, the brothers examined their blast. The rock had been blown up to the depth of a foot, and several small seams of copper stood exposed. They repeated their blasts several times and by working on their new mine all day, drove it four feet deep into the hard rock. By dint of hard work they pried and hammered out several small sheets and nuggets of copper, but of silver or gold they discovered not even a trace.

"It's just as I thought," remarked Dan when, dead tired from the unaccustomed work, they sat at the camp-fire eating their supper; "if silver or gold was found here, the knowledge of it would never have been lost. If these rich copper mines were near Detroit they would be worth millions perhaps, but

here in the uninhabited wilderness of Minong, they are worth nothing.

"Harry, it's Silver Island or bust! for us, and day after to-morrow we are going to see Amigoosheb's message."

"Are we?" asked Harry in a listless way. "We'll never find Silver Island and we'll never see any of Amigoosheb's smoke," and with that he strolled away into a birch thicket where he lay down and had a good cry, for the young boy was homesick, just awfully homesick.

"I wish there were some Indians here or even half-breeds like Le Noir!" he sobbed to himself. "But we'll never see anything here but rocks and trees and water and storms and fog, not even any birds, only these horrid, shrieking gulls. If I ever get home again I'll never leave again!"

However, after he had enjoyed a good night's sleep he felt better, and when the time came to watch for Amigoosheb's signal, Harry was as alert as ever. Even Waggles knew that something was expected to happen.

"Look at that fool pup!" Dan laughed. "He acts as if Le Noir or a porcupine were going to rise out of the lake."

"Dan, I wish you wouldn't always call him a fool pup!" Harry objected. "If he was a fool he'd be asleep now."

The boys had the pile of fuel for their answer all in place before noon. On the ground they had piled up dry wood ready to be lighted. Over the dry stuff they had piled armloads and armloads of green boughs of spruce and cedar and wet rotten log, and more green boughs were cut and piled up, ready for use if needed.

But noon passed and another hour and another, and no smoke arose from Pie Island.

"I told you we wouldn't see any smoke," said Harry in great disappointment. "I wish we were home!"

"Now, Harry, remember what you promised me and don't be a baby," Dan spoke up sharply. "I told Amigoosheb we'd wait a month for his signal. We may not get it today or to-morrow, but if he's alive we'll get

it. If you are ever going to be a man, you'll have to learn to wait!

"Amigoosheb is a pagan Indian, but he stands by his friends, always! Now, you keep your eyes glued on Pie Island. I'm going to lie down for a nap. Wake me up when you see smoke."

Harry had been on watch about half an hour when he thought he saw a faint wreath of smoke rise amongst the trees of Pie Island, but the next moment it was lost in the blue haze in which the island lay spread out like a large dark patch low on the horizon.

In order to make sure, Harry walked a few hundred yards through low brush to a higher point from which he could get a better view. Scarcely had he reached this point when he started back on a run. "Oh, Dan, Dan!" he yelled at the top of his voice; "the smoke! Amigoo"—he stumbled over a root—"Amigoosheb's made a smoke, one big smoke!"

Dan slashed through the brush like a moose and reached the point before Harry.

"Look sharp," he said when Harry arrived

all out of breath; "isn't there a little smoke to the west of the big one?"

And while the brothers were watching and while Waggles was doing his comical best to discover the cause of his masters' excitement, two thick black smokes appeared over the spruces and pines of Pie Island. Straight up rose the dark columns in the still clear air of autumn, then the tops began to spread like the crowns of gigantic Norway pines that would reach the sky.

"That smoke tells the message plainly enough," observed Dan as he vigorously struck his ax deep into an old stump. "That thief and murderer Le Noir is on our trail again and we have to keep our eyes open and our wits clear! No more copper mining and fooling around for us!"

CHAPTER XX

PREPARING FOR THE ENEMY

THE lads were not slow in answering Amigoosheb's signal, and such a thick column of smoke went up from their fire that they felt sure it was plainly visible on Pie Island fifteen miles away.

But where was Le Noir and what were his plans? Had he seen the signal smokes of Amigoosheb? If he had, he had probably also surmised their meaning and had seen the signal of the boys and would soon be following their trail with the stealth and cunning of a lynx. Could they outwit him? Or could they surprise him and compel him to quit dogging their trail and force him to leave the island?

"Why not travel by night?" suggested Harry. "We couldn't get lost on a clear still night."

"I have thought of that, too," replied Dan; "but it won't do. We could never recognize Silver Island at night, and we might get wrecked on concealed rocks and drown within half a mile of land. A birch-bark canoe doesn't stand much rock sliding. We have to do our exploring in broad daylight and take our chance on fighting it out with Le Noir if we ever sight him.

"Isle Royale is so large that we might not meet him in a year, but by accident we may run into him to-morrow.

"We shall run up this north shore and work around the east end of the island. If he has started on the west end and is working around on the south shore—and I think that's what he is doing—we shall not meet him for some time, and I feel sure that he could not see our signals."

"What makes you think he has gone to the west end?"

"Because that part is nearest to the mouth of the Brule, and I think he'd keep going the way he started and work around the south

shore, and I have no doubt he thinks that we have gone that way too."

The next morning the brothers were astir early. The sun glittered on the deep blue lake, which lay as calm as a mirror under the thin haze of autumn. As the canoe swiftly passed many small islands which the boys had already explored, gracefully soaring gulls followed them for miles without moving a wing.

"If we had any food to throw to them we'd soon have a hundred following us," remarked Dan.

Harry wanted to know why they weren't all nearly white, and Dan told him that the grayish-brown ones were the young of the season.

"They fly almost as gracefully now as the old ones," he said, "but you ought to see the youngsters run around on the low small islands in June before they can fly. They are funny-looking chicks then."

In the middle of the afternoon they reached Amygdaloid Island, where the eastern end of

the island begins to be cut up into a confusion of long narrow peninsulas and outlying islands, separated by a maze of channels, long narrow bays and inlets. The bays and channels are from a few rods to a mile wide but run from one to ten miles in length and the peninsulas, islands, and headlands and necks which they separate show the same variation in length and width. It would be difficult to find a region where water and rock and wild forests are so bewilderingly, but still so beautifully mixed and interlaced as they are at the royal island of Minong.

The boys ran about two miles up the narrow channel, crossed a shallow place between two islands and ran back a mile to the end of a bay where they made camp for the night.

"Wherever Le Noir may be," said Dan, "I know he's not in this cove, so we shall have as fine a camp-fire to-night as we can build; but until dark we must explore."

After walking half a mile inland they came to another channel only a few rods wide, but at least two miles long.

"Now," remarked Dan, "I have the lay of the land here. Beginning at the open lake there is Amygdaloid Island, five miles long and half a mile wide, then comes the long channel, then a five-mile peninsula, then the bay on which we camp, then this long ridge, and here in front of us is the narrow fiord which separates us from the mainland of the island."

"Let's swim across!" urged Harry. "It's not more than sixty yards."

Dan put his hand in the water. "No," he said, "we mustn't risk it. It's too cold; we might take cramps.

"I'll tell you what we'll do. Go and pull up some spruce roots for ropes. I'll roll a few of these drift logs together and in ten minutes we'll go across on a raft."

Although Dan estimated the water to be from twenty to thirty feet deep, they could see clearly the rocks and green algæ on the bottom and schools of lake trout which were swimming about.

The main part of the island showed the

same character as the necks they had crossed. Much of the grooved and striated, brownish rock was entirely bare, but from the scant patches of soil, and even from the crevices of the rock, grew stunted spruce, birch, poplar, and mountain-ash, while many shrubs like shadbush, choke-cherry and moose maple helped to conceal the wild barrenness of the rock.

When they had gone scarcely half a mile, they came unexpectedly to the bank of a small lake.

"Well, this beats me," exclaimed Harry. "Here's a lake on the island, and it's a mighty pretty one too."

"Oh, this is not the only one," Dan told him. "Amigoosheb told me there were more than a dozen lakes on the island. He said one was a heap big, six miles long with a big island in it. The Indians call it Lake Siskiwit and it is near the south side of the island. We'll have to find it when we get around there."

While they were sitting down for a few

minutes some large animals walked into the lake to drink.

"Look at the big deer," said Harry.

"You're off, this time, Harry; it's a caribou. Now I know where we can find meat."

After they had returned to camp Harry thought it was the wildest and most beautiful camping-place he had ever seen.

Before them lay the glassy bay, tinted red and orange and purple by the changing sunset sky. On both shores the trees and rocks were reflected on the limpid mirror, a flock of mergansers and loons played and splashed about a few hundred yards away, while far down the bay two dark islands partly screened the view but still allowed the eye to run along an open lane and catch a glimpse of the boundless lake, where, far away toward the darkening east, lake and sky seemed to blend.

And in this manner the lads continued their exploration day after day and week after week. No cove, no island, no ridge was passed. For ten or more hours a day their sharp eyes looked for the little island under

the breast of the Sitting Crane. Only on Sundays they rested quietly in camp. They washed and mended their clothes and talked of Father and Mother and Margaret and of their friend Amigoosheb and of the evil-faced Le Noir.

In and out they paddled through the sinuous coves and around the finger-like headlands that terminate in Lock Point.

They explored Duncan's Bay and Tobin's Harbor, they paddled up and down the twenty-mile channel that ends in the beautiful and well-sheltered bight of Rock Harbor. They even risked their frail craft six miles out to sea to examine the big hog's-back of Passage Island.

As the weeks passed by the trees and shrubs shed their gold and crimson autumn foliage. Flocks of robins came and feasted for a few days on the fiery orange fruit of the mountain-ash. Then the flocks arose and vanished to the south shore of the great lake, and in their wake came long lines of Canada geese and flocks of ducks who only used the Royal

Island as a landmark by which to steer their course southward. Still later the shrill cry of flocks of snow geese was heard at night and loons and mergansers from the far north assembled on the fish-teeming coves and bays and inland lakes.

The boys felt that winter was close at hand and that a snowstorm might sweep down upon them any day. But their work was not done and they pursued it with a boyish zeal and relish; for, although it was now early November, they had not found Silver Island nor had they seen either the canoe or the campfire smoke of Le Noir.

They were now exploring the great Siskiwit Bay, a grand body of water between the south shore of Isle Royale and the chain of narrow, outlying, rocky ridges of the Siskiwit Islands, a bay twenty miles long and six miles wide.

Most of the loons and mergansers had disappeared; only the great herring-gulls, who raise their young and make their summer

homes on the Siskiwit Islands, were still present in large numbers.

"What do you say, little brother?" asked Dan, one forenoon as they pulled into a small shallow bay at Fisherman's Point after rounding the long shore of Siskiwit Bay; "shall we take a chance on exploring that long chain of islands or shall we make a halt and find a good place for winter quarters? I feel that the autumn snowstorms may catch us now almost any day, and it's a cinch now that we shall have to winter somewhere in the wild forest of Minong."

"Take a chance on the Siskiwits, Dan. We can get back to Minong in some way."

"A game kid you are, Harry! We'll try it then. I see plenty of timber on the Siskiwits so we won't suffer for want of fuel if we are marooned. And if we are caught we'll wait until the bay freezes over and sled our canoe across the ice to the mainland of Isle Royale, for that big sheltered bay will surely freeze over solid."

CHAPTER XXI

IN A NORTHEASTER ON THE SISKIWITS

THE swells ran dangerously high in the open lake when the brothers headed their canoe boldly northeastward in the direction of the Siskiwit Islands, which, beginning a few miles from Fisherman's Point, ran out into the open lake for twelve miles, like the backs of gigantic, stranded whales.

To avoid the dangerous swells, they took what steamboat men nowadays call the inside passage, but so expert had they become with the paddles and so well they knew the moods and dangers of the great fresh-water sea that they calmly passed over waves and swells which in the beginning of their trip they had avoided under fear of death.

"What can live on these whaleback islands, anyhow?" Harry wondered.

"Not a thing as far as I can judge, but gulls," suggested Dan. "I don't think a single four-footed creature lives on the whole chain, not even the omnipresent wood-mice.

"They're about the most storm-swept chain I ever set eyes on and if they weren't well wooded in spite of being so low and narrow, I'd be afraid, at this time of the year, to stay overnight on them."

About ten miles from Fisherman's Point, on an island nameless even to this day, the brothers made their camp.

Dan selected for a camp-site a little spot surrounded by scrubby spruce and pine, and with just enough soil on it to hold the tent stakes.

"I don't like this weather much," he remarked, as they went to bed with the usual back-log fire throwing good cheer into their tent in the otherwise oppressive solitude of a desolate and uninhabitable island.

"What's wrong with the weather? I think it's fine; it feels almost like spring," Harry voiced his idea of it.

"That's just it. It's too warm for this season. A clear frosty sky and a cutting wind from the northwest would suit me much better than these clouds and the damp breeze coming from the northeast. It feels like rain. And if it begins to rain from those quarters, look out for snow before the rain is two hours old."

It was some time after midnight when Dan awoke, and the rain was pattering down in large drops on the tent, and a fresh northeaster played with a foreboding soughing over the scrubby pines and spruces.

Dan arose and drove down every tent stake, put some dry wood in the tent and replenished the fire.

In the morning the snow was coming down thick, and was so soft and sticky that it clung to the trees and bushes, bending them down under the heavy weight. From the tent the boys had to scrape it because the soggy mass threatened to break the tent rope. The fire was out; in fact it was buried under a layer of wet snow.

"Jerusalem!" cried Dan, as he kicked the snow from the fireplace and uncovered the wood he had piled up; "there's a foot of snow on the island, and it's still coming down as if the clouds themselves were falling!

"Get busy, Harry, and pile up some wood; we'll have a time getting fuel when all this mush freezes to solid ice."

After an hour's lively chopping on the part of Dan, and carrying and piling up on the part of Harry, Dan stopped work and made breakfast.

"I have an appetite now," he remarked. "We have wood enough for three days, so let her blow and snow, we'll be comfortable."

But about the comfort, he was much mistaken. By noon it had turned bitter cold and the wind was blowing a gale. The snow, frozen to lumps and layers of ice, broke down almost every tree on the island. With the rush of the storm and the roar of the breakers mingled the cracking and crashing of the trees, as if an earthquake were convulsing the rocky backbone of the ridge.

Higher and higher rolled and foamed the waves. The spray began to fly among the tree tops, and by night the whole island was awash with the splash of great breakers that come rolling, rolling in from the black waste of the storm-lashed sea.

"Good Lord, Dan!" exclaimed Harry; "if you weren't here I'd think the world was coming down."

"I couldn't hold it," retorted Dan; "but this is the worst racket I've ever been in. I really believe our canoe would blow or wash away if I hadn't piled a lot of rocks on top of it."

About midnight the floor of the tent became flooded, and the boys had to sit on a pile of brush. Again and again a splash from a breaker dashed against the tent and poured streams of ice-cold water on the crouching boys. At first their closely wrapped and doubly-folded blankets protected them, but before long there was no dry piece of cloth or blanket in the tent.

Their camp-fire had been drowned out hours

ago. All night they crouched on their little hummock of brush, wet to their skins and shivering with cold, trying to dodge the drenching, icy splashes which could not be dodged.

When, after a sheer endless wait in darkness, the gray of dawn came, the lads were glad to stretch their cramped legs and face the uproar in the open.

Each grabbed an ax and began to chop wildly to start the blood circulating through his half-frozen body. Then they floundered about through two feet of snow and slush until they found a spot high enough to build a roaring fire and make breakfast.

"Thanks to the good Lord!" Dan exclaimed as if in prayer, "that we lived through this awful night. I surely thought for awhile we would have to tie ourselves to a tree in order not to be blown into the lake."

When their spirits had been revived by hot tea and meat, and the blazing fire had dried and warmed them, they began to enjoy the grandeur of the storm.

Clouds of snow were still whipped over the

billows before the gale, and great waves like mountain ridges rolled and rolled down the rocky slopes of the island and lifted and pushed the great slabs of brown rock as if they were chips of wood.

"Well, we lived through this, little brother!" Dan said as they returned to the fire from a walk around the island; "but winter is upon us in dead earnest. We can't stay here, and how we'll ever get back to the main island, I don't know."

CHAPTER XXII

ESCAPING FROM THE SISKIWITS

WINTER certainly had begun in earnest. Even after the furious gale had died down, the sea continued to run so high that no frail bark canoe could have lived in it, and before the dangerous swells from the northeast died down, the boisterous winds blew from another quarter.

For two weeks the boys were marooned on the Siskiwits, and although a steady cold northwester followed the changeable winds, there was no prospect of an early escape.

From the mainland of Isle Royale, the boys could see the ice grow out into the bay, but on the rocky slopes of the Siskiwits, exposed to the wind, no ice formed, for here the waves and breakers thundered and rolled and seethed and splashed, day and night, week in and week out, with a deafening monotony

which almost made the boys despair of ever getting away.

Their supplies began to run low. To fish in the high running sea was impossible, even if the fish had not avoided the breakers near shore. On the island itself not a trace of any living thing was to be found. No sign of rabbit, fox or weasel; not even the track of a wood-mouse. The only living thing besides themselves and Waggles were small flocks of screaming, shrieking gulls, whose presence only added to the weird desolation and who seemed to utter their piercing cries in mockery of the lads' helplessness.

At last, after a period of nearly three weeks of storm, there came a spell of calm and very cold weather, and in one intensely cold night the mass of slush and the drifting and grinding thin cakes of ice were cemented together and in the morning a fringe of solid ice, a quarter of a mile wide, lined the north shore of the Siskiwits.

"Good luck, at last!" cried Dan, when he looked at the lake in the morning. "To-day

we leave these beastly whalebacks; the ice is frozen solid to the shore and the bay is calm."

The lads were much in doubt whether they should drag their canoe over the ice along shore, or whether they should attempt to launch the craft and paddle straight across the bay toward the outlet of Siskiwit Lake.

Harry was in favor of trying the water route. "It's a good twenty miles around on the ice, and it would take us all day," he urged, in objection to the ice route.

But Dan, who had examined the ice, knew that half-way to the open water they would break through, and he was afraid that the sharp edges of the thin ice would rip their canoe.

"And if that happens we might lose our canoe and our whole outfit and then we would be in a fine mess. We would have to stay until the birch bark peels in June, and I am not at all sure that we could find birches large enough for a canoe. No, the ice route is the only safe one."

To make some kind of a sled for their canoe was somewhat of a problem. They had no nails, and their only large cutting tools were an ax and a hatchet.

They cut four short spruce logs into the right shape for sleigh runners for two short sleighs. The runners of each sleigh were connected by two crosspieces. They burnt holes through the crosspieces and into the runners by using their ramrod made red hot in a good fire. Then they drove stout wooden pegs through the crosspieces and into the runners and the sleighs were ready for travel.

Sleighing their canoe and equipment over the ice did not prove to be traveling as fast as they had expected. Near the shore the ice was too rough and farther out where it was smooth they had to be very careful.

When night came they had only made about ten miles, and they made camp on a shallow and well-sheltered bay at Fisherman's Point where the ice was thick and as smooth as glass.

"How's that for a skating pond?" asked

Dan as he pointed to the smooth glittering surface.

"I'm so dog tired, Dan," Harry answered, "that I don't care to look at it. I've been thinking that I'd make a pretty bum arctic traveler."

"You'll feel better, kid, after you pour some hot tea into your stomach."

Dan made camp in a hurry as if he had something on his mind.

"Fix up the grub, cookee," he then called to Harry as he strode away. "I'm going to take a squint at the scenery from yonder high ridge. I'll be back pretty quick."

"You can squint at the scenery or smell at it," grumbled Harry to himself. "He's been staring at the scenery all day; half the time he didn't hear what I was saying. I bet he's been thinking of that blue-eyed girl of his at Detroit.

"Waggles, you fool pup, get out of my way! No wonder you're spry after riding in the canoe and sleeping under the blanket all day. Some hot tea and venison for me and then

under the blankets! You and Dan can have my share of the scenery!"

"I couldn't see a thing," Dan remarked on returning.

"What were you trying to see anyhow in this God-forsaken desert?"

"What am I trying to see, you grouchy kid? I've been trying to see smoke, Le Noir's smoke!"

"Oh, I thought you were dreaming of—"

"If he's on the island, and I think he is," Dan continued without apparently catching Harry's thought, "he cannot be far from this bay unless he has passed us or followed us all this time without our once getting sight of him.

"I've peeled my eyes for him almost as much as for Silver Island, but never a trace have I seen of the dark-faced scoundrel!

"But I have a feeling that he is not many miles away from this point."

"And what are you going to do with him if you find him?"

"Bless your soul, Harry, if I only knew! I

hope we won't meet him, but I just feel that some day I'll see the smoke of his camp-fire and then, we'll have to get him or he'll get us!"

On the second day the boys found smooth and safe ice and made such good time that now Waggles was given a ride, because Harry claimed Waggles couldn't run on smooth ice.

About noon the boys reached a stream of considerable size which tumbled into the lake through a tangle of alder, willows and moose maple.

The lads stopped to explore.

"Dan!" cried Harry, "this is sure the place for winter quarters; lots of fish in this stream! By George, they're trout! See them run. I'll go fishing every day!"

Half an hour's hard work upstream brought the boys through deep snow and a tangle of brush to the shore of a large lake, from which the creek was the outlet and which was still open in the middle.

"Siskiwit Lake!" Dan exclaimed. "Plenty of wood and shelter, good place from which

to make long and short trips, running water all the time, no fooling with melting ice or snow or chopping holes through thick ice. Best camping-place I ever saw, Harry.

"Here's where we den up for the winter."

CHAPTER XXIII

SNOWED IN

DENNING up for the winter on the rocky ribs of Isle Royale, proved, however, not as simple a problem as it might have been in the clay banks of the Missouri.

A dugout would have been warm and easy to build had there been any clay or sand into which to dig. Building a small cabin of flat rocks was another plan they had thought of a month ago, but now every suitable rock was frozen fast to the ground and covered with two feet of snow.

When they had rejected both the dugout and the stone cabin, Harry suggested that a log cabin with a fireplace would make a mighty cozy winter camp.

"It certainly would be the thing!" Dan

assented, "if it wouldn't take us a month to build it."

"Oh, shucks, Dan!" Harry asserted. "In a week my grandmother could build a log cabin, and you and I can do it in a day."

"You? You couldn't build a dog house in a day without getting all tired out about ten times! As for building a decent log cabin, we would need about seventy-five logs ten feet long and six inches thick. We'd have to drag or carry them from that spruce swamp a quarter of a mile east, and with cutting firewood and doing other camp work, it would take us a month.

"Then you forget, Harry, that our meat will last us just about three days more, and we have to do some hunting mighty soon or starve. If we could live on brush and bark like moose, we might build a cabin, but as it is, we can't; it would take us a month."

The first day of their encampment was clear and calm, and Dan took his gun and started out after rabbits because he was afraid that a

spell of stormy weather might make hunting impossible.

Harry was to fish for trout, but the boys found to their dismay that they had lost every hook in the storm on the Siskiwits.

However, the youthful fisherman was not baffled. He tied small pieces of meat to a string and was able to pull out the fish after they had entirely swallowed the bait. Others he yanked out by letting them get a good hold of a piece of red flannel. These trout in Siskiwit Creek had perhaps never seen a human fisherman. They were entirely fearless, and bit so greedily on Harry's meat balls and were so curious about the little patches of bright red flannel that within half a day Harry had caught half a hundred fine fish weighing from one to two pounds apiece.

"I bet I'll beat Dan in bringing in meat," he thought to himself. But when he saw Dan coming along the lake shore from the west, he felt less sure about having secured the larger amount of meat, for Dan dropped

more than a dozen big white rabbits near the camp-fire.

"Good gracious!" he exclaimed; "I could hardly carry that load to camp! I never saw so many rabbits. I just walked along the edge of the woods and picked them off as they came out on the ice. All the rabbits on this neck of land seemed to be moving across the lake. I think I saw a hundred of them away out on the ice, hopping along toward the north shore of Siskiwit Lake.

"I've heard about these snowshoe rabbits migrating, but I never saw it before."

"What do you suppose makes them hike out?" Harry asked.

Dan hardly knew. Maybe they had eaten up many of their food bushes on the neck. While cedar and hazel, rose bushes and almost everything else, except spruce, alder and pine, had been cut and barked and nibbled. Or perhaps they knew by instinct or experience that the northerly winds would blow so much snow from the lake into the woods that much of their food brush would be buried;

or, it maybe, they just followed an instinct to migrate from one part of the woods to another, and naturally they all started on the first fine day.

"Why, Harry! It wasn't really hunting, it was just getting meat. I could have hit some of them with a club, so tame they were, but I'm powerful glad we have both the rabbits and the fish; now we can build our wigwam."

While in quest of the rabbits, Dan had thought out a plan for a winter cabin.

The boys selected a well-sheltered spot where the soil was thick enough to drive poles into the ground. Here they first set up their tent, and then they began to build a brush cabin around it and over it, so as to have just enough space for a man to walk around the tent. They built a framework of upright poles and then wove spruce boughs among the poles. The slanting roof was simply a spruce thatch, and was held in place by several poles firmly tied over it.

The whole was the work of one day and the

boys felt quite proud of it. In the evening when the light and heat of their customary back-log fire was caught inside the tent and they were warm and comfortable, Harry said it would be bully to live in this brush camp and he didn't care now how much it snowed and how cold it got.

The brush camp, of course, needed a constant fire to keep it warm, and in order to keep out the northerly winds entirely the boys piled blocks of snow outside the brush, thus making the camp as impenetrable to wind as a brick wall.

But through the roof a good deal of heat was still escaping, and the boys conceived the idea of covering the roof with snow. This plan did not work out as well as they had expected, for when on mild days they also had a good fire going, some of the snow melted and the roof began to leak.

"That plan's no good," said Dan. "When the spring thaws begin, that roof will be leaking all the time and everything will get wet and mussed and we'll have to move our tent

out of the brush cabin just when we want to stay in it the most."

"But what can we do?" Harry wondered. "Bark doesn't peel now, there are no deer or moose on the island, and the Lord only knows where the caribou are. What about rabbit skins?"

"You ought to know, Harry, that they're no good for covering a roof. They're both too small and too thin and soft.

"I know what will do it. Lynx will. And I think there are plenty of them on the island. I saw several tracks when I was after the rabbits."

Had Dan seen any of the animals, Harry asked eagerly. Why hadn't he told about them?

"No, I didn't," Dan continued. "You seldom see the big fierce cats, although they may be following your tracks as they often do.

"Eight or ten lynx skins spread over that brush roof would keep out the rain as if it were shingled.

"We'll fix up our snowshoes and cut out a trail for lynx. Catching a bunch of lynx is our next piece of work, Harry."

CHAPTER XXIV

THE SOLITUDE OF A LONG WINTER

AS soon as the boys had put their snowshoes in working order, they began to cut a trail for their lynx traps, of which they had half a dozen.

Dan thought it would be useless to set the traps closer than at intervals of half a mile, so they had to cut a trail three miles long.

They made use of all small natural openings along the western end of Siskiwit Lake, then they followed a small stream where rabbit trails were numerous and where they found many signs and tracks of lynx. After following the stream for about a mile, Dan concluded, as he looked over the lay of the land, "We will turn north and circle back to the lake. In this way any lynx heading for rabbit grounds at the west end of the lake is bound to strike the trail."

To cut out this three-mile trail so that they could freely pass over it on snowshoes was the most arduous piece of work they had ever undertaken.

The fall of sticky snow, followed by the fierce November gale, had caused a destruction in the woods the like of which Dan had never seen before. Large and old spruces and balsam-firs lay broken down in the brush, younger and more supple trees were bent like bows and their crowns were frozen fast in the hard snow. The smaller brush like alder, moose maple and willows had been matted into impenetrable tangles or was completely buried under the frozen crust. On the whole stretch of three miles an almost endless amount of chopping had to be done. It would have been easy to set the traps along the open shore, but it would also have been useless, for as Dan well knew, the furtive lynx hunts silently, like a gray-brown shadow, along the game trails of the dense forest.

It was near Christmas time, when at last the trail was cut and the traps set out.

"Well, brother," remarked Dan, as both gazed into the evening camp-fire, "you and the pup will have no end of time to sleep, from now on. We'll be camping at this fire-place for three months and it may be four months before the ice leaves the bay.

"You can make up lost sleep and you can pile up sleep ahead. From now until spring we have nothing to do but visit our traps twice a week, cut enough wood for the camp-fire, catch fish and rabbits and eat them up and,—sleep, and then sleep some more—that's all.

"The snow is four feet deep now, and if it keeps on coming down, coming until April the way it has been doing, it seems to me it will reach the tree-tops and take all summer to melt away."

"What do you suppose Le Noir is doing now?" Harry asked abruptly.

"Just what we are doing,—nothing; denned up like a bear, just as we are."

"Don't you suppose he'll travel around and try to find us?"

"Not he. This lazy life just suits a half-breed."

"Why can't we look for him? I don't want to just sleep and eat all winter."

"What's the use of looking for trouble? I hope we may never see him again!" was Dan's emphatic wish.

"If we can't keep busy we'll start something new. Go on a caribou hunt or go exploring the interior eastward."

"That's fine, a caribou hunt," cried Harry. "It would be great. Let's do it soon! And why can't we make some trips westward also if we have so much time?"

"I'll tell you why not," Dan replied with a gleam in his eyes. "It's just as well if we don't meet our friend, Le Noir, until later. He wouldn't be a welcome guest at our Christmas dinner."

The following day as the boys leisurely put a few finishing touches on their camp, they felt for the first time the solitude of their winter camp. So completely cut off were they in the wild forests of Minong that they

could not even send a message to any other human being. It seemed as if they were alone in the world. No human eye could see their camp-fire, their voices could reach no human ear; none but God in heaven could hear their prayer if want and distress should beset them.

It snowed almost incessantly. To-day the white crystals came down as a fine powder sifted from the clouds; the next day they came in rolling, billowing masses, driven across Lake Siskiwit by a roaring northwester. And when the wind veered around to the northeast, it seemed as if the very blankets of the arctic snows were being spread over the forests and rocks of Minong.

"The snow will surely reach the tree tops," mused little Harry as he sat alone and looked wistfully into the solitude, while Dan had gone on a brief hunting trip. And in the neck of the woods between Siskiwit Lake and Lake Superior the great snowdrifts which rolled across the ice of Lake Siskiwit did begin to reach the tops of the small mountain-

ash trees on which only two months ago flocks of merrily calling robins had feasted; only the topmost sprays protruded, like brown fingers, from the white drifts. Nature's shrubbery of scarlet kinnikinic, brown hazel, and alder, willow and glossy moose maple was completely buried out of sight. Only the dark green spires of the spruces, the straight boles of the tamaracks, hung with the loose tracery of leafless branches, and the white trunks of old birches dividing into a fine spray of pendant brown whipcords seemed determined to defy the growing height of the snowdrifts.

And how different the sounds that broke the silence of the winter solitude, from those which enliven even the wildest forests in summer!

The roaring waves lay silent, but through the long winter nights reverberated the thunder of the ice, as long running cracks and crevices formed in the thickening sheets of both Superior and Siskiwit; the sound seem-

ingly coming from everywhere and nowhere like the echoes from distant artillery.

Whenever the winds ceased sweeping through the tree-tops, the music of the creek became plainly audible, as its waters leaped and surged babbling and gurgling over rocks and boulders from Siskiwit to Superior.

The gulls were gone. Now and then a flock of tiny trilling chickadees carefully searched through the tree-tops as if they had lost something very valuable; or a flock of beautiful red crossbills, chirping contentedly, fed on the seeds of spruces and balsams which they cut out of the cones with their queer scissors-like bills. The hammering of the great black log-cock often resounded from the dead tree trunks, and almost every night the deep guttural hoot of big owls broke the silence of the forest, but all these sights and sounds only deepened the feeling of solitude which often sorely tempted Harry to cry with homesickness when he was left alone in the cabin.

However, there was no lack of work and

exercise. Two days a week the boys put in visiting their traps on the three-mile trail, another two days were spent in cutting firewood and carrying or dragging it to camp. One day was needed for hunting rabbits, grouse and spruce hens and for fishing, and Saturdays they went exploring the shores and neighborhood of the lake.

After a week of hard exercise in the cold crisp air, both enjoyed Sunday as a day of rest, when they had time to read from Captain Mayne Reid's "Boy Voyageurs," the only book they had in camp. Tired of reading, they talked about home and speculated on the whereabouts of Le Noir and the location of Silver Island.

Although they visited the high ridges west of Lake Siskiwit several times, and strained their eyes to discover the smoke of Le Noir's camp-fire, they never beheld any sign of him. As far as they could tell from what they saw and heard, they were the only human beings on the island.

An incident on one of their visits to their

traps nearly proved fatal to their whole expedition.

Dan, in order to save ammunition, tried to kill a big captured lynx with a club. In this attempt he ventured too close to the maddened beast, which sprang at him ferociously and with its steel-like claws cut four deep gashes in his knee.

For awhile both lads thought Dan would bleed to death. Only by cooling the wounds with snow, bandaging the knee with a handkerchief and strips of flannel torn from Dan's shirt, did they stanch the red flow, but it did not entirely cease until Dan lay down on his back and raised the wounded leg against a tree.

While Dan limped home the bleeding started again, and that evening the camp on Siskiwit Lake was converted into a hospital, Dan lying on his back with his leg raised in a sling, and Harry acting as both camp cook and nurse.

The next week Harry and Waggles visited the traps without Dan, and Harry felt not a

little proud when he dragged a forty-pound lynx into camp.

"You bet I didn't try to kill him with a club. I put a bullet in his head and Waggles and I didn't touch him until he was stone dead."

"Yes, I'm sure Waggles will never go near a live lynx," Dan laughed.

By the middle of February the lads had caught ten large lynxes. The skins of these they sewed together with strings of lynx rawhide and covered their cabin with them after they had carefully scraped the snow off the roof. The edges of the skins they tied down with rawhide strings, and they secured the whole by means of poles, and added a few flat rocks from the creek.

In this way winter passed rapidly. Their caribou hunt never came off, because they did not need the meat, always being able to secure plenty of small game and fish, and their well-eked-out supply of hominy, dried berries and wild rice prevented their getting tired of a steady meat diet.

But the main reason why the caribou hunt

HE VENTURED TOO CLOSE TO THE MADDENED BEAST.—*Page 203.*

never came off was the difficulty of travel. Almost everywhere the snow lay six feet deep, and in many places it was even deeper, so that the only way to travel was on snowshoes. In many places the woods were so thick that it would have been necessary to cut a trail. But the boys were in no need of meat and had no idea on what part of the island the caribou wintered, so they did not attempt long inland journeys over the island.

As the great spring break-up approached, the boys began to watch eagerly every sign of changing weather.

Their plans were all made: they would first search around the west end of Isle Royale. If by that time they had not found Silver Island, they would cross over to Thunder Bay, explore among the islands there and work westward to the mouth of Pigeon River whence they had started for Isle Royale.

"What if we don't find Silver Island? What'll we do then?" asked Harry.

"Go home and say we can't do it," Dan answered bluntly.

"Maybe Le Noir has already found it," suggested Harry.

"Not very likely. He knows less about it than we do."

"Perhaps he's quit and gone home."

"Perhaps he has, but I doubt it. He couldn't finish exploring the island before winter set in, but he could winter almost anywhere on this island where small game and fish are so plentiful.

"If we don't discover his canoe or his camp smoke after the ice has gone out of Siskiwit Bay, I'll quit thinking about him, but I can't before."

CHAPTER XXV

DECOYING THE TRAILER

WHEN at last the long winter broke, the face of nature changed rapidly. From the open lake the waves seemed to be eating up the ice, while southerly winds and rains caused the snow-drifts to shrink visibly from day to day; and, where the winds had an unobstructed sweep, they piled up the ice along the shore.

Thousands of small birds seemed to drop from the sky during warm nights; some lingered on the island for a day or two, others stayed only a few hours before they disappeared as mysteriously as they had come.

The flocks of great white gulls had returned. Fish-hawks and bald eagles soared and screamed over Siskiwit Bay, and then plunged after their prey with folded wings.

The black ravens, twice as big as crows, ut-

tered their deep croaks and fed on whatever the winds threw ashore.

Toward the end of April the whole bay was open and the boys broke camp, although there was still much snow left in the woods.

"We'll move a little farther east," Dan revealed his plan, "and explore that part of the coast more carefully than we did in November." Harry did not see the use of this, but he was so happy to be away that he made no objection.

When they had gone about three or four miles, Dan landed. He unloaded the canoe and hid it behind some bushes. Then he took up his pack and started inland. At the end of half a mile he dropped the pack behind a dense spruce thicket.

"This is our camp for to-night," he remarked. "Perhaps we'll stay a day or two longer if we like it."

Having put the camp in shape and eaten dinner, Dan started back to the shore. Harry was so happy to be moving again that he did not notice that Dan seemed absorbed in his

own thoughts and paid little attention to the questions and remarks of his younger brother.

For several days they wandered up and down the shore, in, what seemed to Harry, an aimless sort of way.

Quite often Dan would say: "Harry, you and the pup can explore around here a bit, I'll climb that high ridge and look around some. Meet me here at noon, and look out that you don't break your legs or your neck among the rocks and fallen trees."

Harry and Waggles enjoyed this very much, for it was only the second time on the whole long trip that the two had been allowed to do as they pleased.

However, after a few days, Harry began to wonder why Dan was wasting so much time. On several occasions he found that Dan had been lying nearly all day under a tree near the shore reading "The Boy Voyageurs" for the third time.

"I guess it's Jeanie again," Harry thought to himself. "Ever since he used to go seeing Jeanie, Dan's had some queer spells. Golly,

I wonder if he wrote her that we were going to hunt up that Silver Island? We'll never find it though! And Dan can't get a letter from Jeanie as long as we wander around here. So why don't we move?"

On the evening of the fifth day, as they were eating their supper on a high ridge from which the Siskiwit Islands were in plain view, Harry couldn't stand keeping still any longer.

"Dan," he asked impatiently, "what are we lying around here for anyway? If we don't get going pretty soon, we won't get home all summer and Amigoosheb will send word to Father that we're dead. Why don't we get a move on?"

But Dan, who had ceased eating, did not answer. In fact, Harry saw now that Dan was staring fixedly at something far away toward the Siskiwit Islands, and hadn't even heard his question.

"Dan, what're you staring at?" Harry broke out, as he stood up to get a better view. "What do you see?"

"Harry," snapped Dan, springing up, "I see Le Noir's camp smoke! Confound the sneak! There it is behind the bushes of the farthest Siskiwit. Nobody else would go there. It's Le Noir as sure as you live!

"I thought I'd spy him from this point, but I was almost ready to give up. It can't be anybody else. He doesn't know we are here because I hid our camp so well that he can't see our smoke. He thinks we wintered at the east end. If he thought we were close by, he'd never make such a big camp smoke."

"What are we going to do now?" Harry ventured, after a pause.

"We'll decoy that miserable scoundrel. Catch him and show him what sort of a sneaking villain he is! We won't give him a chance any longer to dog our trail.

"We'll set a trap for him and he'll have to be pretty sharp or we'll get him; I've been planning it a long time."

"Gee," thought Harry to himself, "I was wrong about Jeanie this time."

The boys returned to their camp from

which a plain trail already extended to the place where Dan had been watching, and they took pains to make the trail still plainer.

They returned on the same trail, carrying their blankets, and each brought his gun, knife and ax or hatchet.

Just below Dan's watching place they built a good-sized camp-fire which would be plainly visible across the bay, but Dan would not let Harry make a blazing bonfire out of it.

"A very big fire might make Le Noir suspicious," was Dan's opinion, "and I want him to think that we are just camping here and have no idea that he is near. I know the villain is as suspicious as an old wolf. He'll not walk into any clumsy trap."

At the end of an hour, Dan arose.

"It's time to go now," he explained. "If Le Noir saw the fire right away, he may be half across the bay now. If we stay here too long he might get the drop on us. At night you can see people around a camp-fire long before they can see you."

According to Dan's plan, Harry and Waggles were to spend the night in camp, while Dan was to lie in wait under a thick clump of spruces only a rod from the trail, from where he could also watch the coast.

"If the black-haired murderer has seen the fire, he'll come to investigate," Dan continued after a pause. "He may come to-night or he may come to-morrow night or the next night. If he hasn't seen it he'll show himself in the bay to-morrow in daylight.

"Tie a rope to that pup and don't let him get away from you! I don't want him to cut up any capers which might give Le Noir a chance to get his hands on you or the pup.

"If I come to the tent I'll give two low whistles; if I want you to come out of the tent I'll give two long yells. Keep your gun handy and don't leave the tent without it, and keep that pup on the rope."

All night long Dan sat or lay on his bed of boughs and listened for the sound of a canoe on shore or for footsteps and movements in the brush. Several times he grew

sleepy and had to dash some cold water on his face to keep awake. Not until the morning sun sent its red rays over the bay and the long low ridges of the Siskiwits did he leave his lair.

As he approached the tent he gave two low whistles and Waggles at once answered by a growl and a bark and came rushing out of the tent. A few seconds later Harry crept out, gun in hand and the other end of the rope tied to his ankle.

"Nothing doing, Harry," was Dan's message, while Harry rubbed his eyes and untied the rope from his ankle. "He's not on this island unless he got the better of us by some kind of sharp ruse.

"Let's see how Waggles will do as a bloodhound, and search the shore with him for a mile east and west of our fireplace.

"We might as well have breakfast first. If in the meantime that half-breed cur travels around a bit, it will be so much easier for bloodhound Waggles to strike the trail."

"Do you think Waggles would follow Le Noir's trail?" Harry wondered.

"Bless your soul, Harry, Waggles remembers the smell of Le Noir as distinctly as he remembers porcupine.

"A dog never forgets his master, his game, and his enemy."

Playing bloodhound on the leash was new experience to Waggles and he often tangled himself in the brush, but he kept his nose on the ground most of the time and seemed to realize that he was acting in a capacity of great importance.

To rabbit tracks Waggles had learned to pay no attention. Fortunately, porcupines do not live on high rocky ground near a windswept shore, and of Le Noir the keen quivering nose of the little terrier bloodhound found no trace.

"He's not on Isle Royale," Dan decided when they had completed the trip. "But he's seen our fire or we would have seen his smoke.

"I shall watch for him again to-night.

Just now I'm going to crawl under those spruces to get some sleep. You and Waggles watch the bay but don't expose yourselves on shore. Call me if you see anything."

Dan slept until noon while Harry and Waggles strolled about under cover along shore, but saw nothing except gulls, loons and fish ducks. There was no canoe on the water and not a trace of smoke to be seen on the chain of islands to the south. The boys themselves built no fire on that day.

In the evening, however, they again had a camp-fire going for an hour, and then Dan once more retired to his hiding-place under the spruces, while Harry and Waggles selected a similar sleeping place about two hundred yards up the trail within calling distance of Dan's voice.

On this watch Dan, because he had enjoyed a long sleep during the day, was not troubled with drowsiness; and he was himself surprised at the many sounds of the night which his keen sense of hearing recognized.

From the bay came an occasional long-

drawn call of a loon, while from the interior of the island was heard distant hooting of owls. From overhead came the voices of flocks of small birds which, Dan concluded, were passing over the island at night on their annual journey northward. In the brush he heard the rustling tread of a woodchuck, and even the almost inaudible scurrying of the timid little wood-mice did not escape his keen ears.

About midnight a breeze sprang up, which caused light rippling waves to break gently on the shore below him, and which he knew might drown the slight noise made by the landing of a canoe.

Once indeed he thought he heard a sound as of a paddle touching a rock a little to the east. He sat up and listened with strained attention. Once more he thought he heard the same sound, but again he was not sure of it and then there were no other sounds but the ceaseless lap-lapping of the waves.

The sky was clear, and very early a faint gray light made the trunks of birch and pop-

lar visible. If Le Noir was coming he would be here soon.

Dan now felt a little fatigued from the long strain of attention. He wondered how many more nights he would have to spend in the brush like a wild beast watching for his prey.

Perhaps Le Noir had given them the slip by paddling away eastward under cover of darkness. He might not be trying to strike their trail. Possibly he had wormed enough information out of Amigoosheb or some other Indian to hunt for Silver Island on his own hook.

"I wish to God he'd come or we'd know where he has gone!" Dan thought.

What if he struck the trail near Harry and Waggles? What would happen then?

It was almost daylight now although the sun had not yet risen. A pair of rabbits hopped playfully past him, but Dan recognized at once the familiar sounds made by their padded feet. He was listening for the slow deliberate footfall of the human hunter

and his eyes were expecting the tall dark shape of a man.

Hark! What was that? Some large creature was slowly coming through the brush. Its movements were almost noiseless, but still audible to the sensitive ears of Dan. Perhaps it was a wolf or bear? No, it couldn't be; there were no wolves and bears on the island.

It was coming nearer now. It was a man. Dan felt the loud thumping of his heart in his ears. He could see the bushes move. Now it stopped. It moved again! Dan forgot about his thumping heart. There stood Le Noir, listening and looking around. He would pass about ten yards north of Dan's hiding-place.

His heavy black hair, grown long and matted through the winter and not covered by a hat or cap, a black beard slightly grizzled, and a coat of cub-bear skin gave him a truly ferocious appearance. He had grown fat during the long winter's rest.

"What a big brute he is," thought Dan,

as the half-breed moved on slowly, "with the body of a bear and the face of a gorilla."

He was still too far for Dan to spring the trap.

"I guess I could knock him out or throw him in a rough-and-tumble fight," thought Dan. "Boxing and wrestling in college gives a fellow some confidence. If he didn't have a knife and a gun I'd like to tackle him."

Now Le Noir had come within ten yards of the spruces, he changed his gun to his left hand to bend aside some bush with his right.

It was the moment Dan had been watching for. With a noiseless spring he stood in the open, his loaded gun leveled at Le Noir's broad chest:

"Drop that gun, you big sneak," he shouted, "or you're a dead man!"

For a second Le Noir looked as savage as a lynx in a trap, and like a wild beast, seemed ready to spring upon the unexpected enemy who had so completely outwitted him. Then he released the hold of his left hand and the gun dropped in the brush.

"Drop your knife!" commanded Dan, and the half-breed obeyed with a vicious scowl.

"Turn and walk back to your canoe," was Dan's next order. "Walk slowly and keep in the open. The minute you try to dodge behind a bush or tree, I fill your skin with buckshot."

Then Dan gave two loud yells and in a few minutes Harry and Waggles were on hand, Waggles barking madly and straining on the rope to get at his enemy whose scent he remembered at once.

Le Noir slunk in silence to his canoe which he had concealed a few hundred yards east of the boys' camp-fire on shore.

"Get in and be off!" Dan ordered, when they reached the canoe. "If we ever see your evil face again on this trip, I'll puncture your skull. Here's your knife. You don't need a gun; you can live on fish for a while.

"If you land within five miles of this spot you'll never make another camp. Now be off!"

When Le Noir was out of gun-shot reach he

uttered a string of horrible curses, oaths and threats in mixed English, French, and Chippewa.

"Take care," Dan called after him; "if harm befalls any of our family you'll pay for it with your life. Three men from Toronto are waiting for you at Fort Frances; they want to know just how Sam Donover was drowned in Lake of the Woods."

"I think he's just a big, blasted coward!" declared Dan after they had been watching Le Noir's canoe going steadily eastward. "He will not dog our trail any more. However, we'll take no chances. The lake is perfectly calm and it will be fine traveling by moonlight. As soon as it is dark we will start westward."

The lads lost no time breaking camp and were ready to start as soon as the long shadows of evening fell over the bay. With steady strokes they proceeded down Siskiwit Bay, and before midnight they rounded Fisherman's Point. As the open lake beyond also lay perfectly calm and no islands

"DROP YOUR KNIFE!"—*Page 221.*

were in sight they traveled along the coast all night.

Not until a red tint appeared on the eastern sky did they begin to look for a landing place, which they found in a very small rocky cove.

As they set up their tent and made breakfast, the whitethroats began to sing, and a flock of noisy crows cawed with curiosity at the visitors to their realm.

When hot tea and a liberal meal of broiled trout had made them feel warm and comfortable, Dan stretched himself on the blankets:

"Now, brother," he yawned, "we're out of danger. Let's take a nap; I'm just awfully sleepy."

CHAPTER XXVI

SILVER ISLAND AT LAST

EARLY in the afternoon they were under way again. The part of the coast they were now exploring is the most exposed of the whole island and Dan feared that, if the lake again became rough, they might have to lie storm-bound for a week.

"So let's make speed while the waves are asleep," said Dan, and just before sunset they ran into the crimson-tinted waters of Washington Harbor at the west end of the island.

As the boys had not allowed themselves to become fat and flabby in their long winter camp, they felt strong and active, and in one long spring day, moving about from sunrise till sunset, they had convinced themselves

that no Silver Island existed in or near the bays and inlets of Washington Harbor.

The weather continuing to be calm and warm, they left the sheltered waters of the west end early next morning and headed the canoe into the open channel between Isle Royale and the mainland of Ontario. They passed only a few small islands and low reefs and on the fourth evening after they had trapped Le Noir, they pitched their tent on the spot of their first camp of Isle Royale, having made an easy run of twenty miles without danger or fatigue.

"Now sleep quick," Dan told Harry, as they rolled in while it was yet daylight. "If the lake is calm to-morrow we shall start at daybreak on the long and dangerous run across the channel to Thunder Bay.

"I'm convinced that Silver Island is not near Isle Royale and God only knows if we shall ever find it."

The morning broke clear and calm, and like an immense mirror of tinted glass the broad channel lay before them as the lads

started at sunrise for Pie Island. As no wind or fog interfered with them they had reached its picturesque shores long before the sun indicated the hour of noon. The afternoon was spent in exploring several small islands in the neighborhood and they camped for the night on the west side of Flatland Island only about a mile from the mainland of Ontario.

For the first time since they started on their long trip Dan felt gloomy and depressed.

"Harry," he began, after he had long stared into the camp-fire in silence, "I'm at my wits' end. I begin to feel we are beaten.

"If we only knew whether Hamigeesek's expression of the 'Sitting Crane' referred to a small or large landscape feature, I would feel more hopeful. I can't help feeling that it must refer to some large feature, because the island itself looked to Hamigeesek like an egg under the breast of a very large bird.

"But my head feels tired, puzzling and thinking about it, and if we don't find Silver

Island somewhere between Thunder Bay and the Pigeon River we'll have to go home and tell them we're beaten.

"Let's go to bed and have a long sleep. We don't have to get up early to-morrow. I feel kind of sick and tired of the whole business and almost wish we had never started!"

Dan still felt blue and discouraged next morning. The brothers ate their breakfast almost in silence, but when they had put out their camp-fire and were almost ready to start, something occurred which made Dan forget that he felt blue or tired.

Harry, who had risen to carry his pack to the shore, stood as if petrified and pointed at the channel:

"Look!" was all he could utter.

There was Le Noir once more paddling along on the very track of the boys. Evidently he had discovered the boys on the day before, but had not expected that they would camp on the low shore of Flatland Island.

"Get in the canoe, take your gun," Dan whispered. "I'll settle him this time!"

Waggles, having at once caught the excitement, jumped into the canoe as the boys pushed off.

Le Noir did not discover that he was being pursued until the boys were within two hundred yards of him. When a noise made by Harry's paddle attracted his attention he yelled a vile oath at his pursuers and started for the Ontario shore a quarter of a mile away as fast as he could go.

"Pull, Harry!" muttered Dan, as they slowly gained on him. "Pull; he'll get away again!"

A few minutes later Le Noir drove his canoe up on the beach. Quick as a flash, he turned and hurled his hatchet at his pursuers. It barely missed Harry's face, and cut a hole in the bottom of their canoe.

Then like a panther he sprang behind some bushes and was gone before Dan could raise his gun and order him to halt, although for a minute the boys could hear him utter oaths and horrible threats of revenge.

When he was out of hearing and the boys

looked at each other in a dazed sort of way, Harry asked:

"What did you intend to do with him, anyway?"

"Heavens, Harry, I don't know. I was so mad and worked the paddle so hard that I didn't think of that.

"But I'm glad I didn't kill him. It would have been a horrible thought to me."

"I'm just awfully afraid he'll hurt Father or Mother or sister," Harry interposed. "I wish we could get home quick now!"

"He won't, Harry, in spite of all his cursing. He's too much of a dirty coward.

"But if he ever does I'll have his life. In this wilderness every man is his own avenger, and Le Noir knows it."

Into Le Noir's canoe the boys piled a lot of rock. They towed it into the channel and with Le Noir's own hatchet Harry ripped it open and it sank out of sight in deep water.

"He'll not follow us any more!" said Dan, as he drove a paddle through the bottom of it.

After they had returned to their camping

place, repaired their canoe and loaded their packs, they steered a northeasterly course.

"We'll explore the islands under the big peninsula at Thunder Bay," explained Dan, "and if we don't find our islands there, we'll have to give up for the present and start for home."

When they were in the middle of the channel between Pie Island and the peninsula, Harry stopped suddenly and pointed his paddle to the highland at their left: "Oh, look, Dan, look!" he exclaimed, ready to rise with excitement; "there he is, there he is, the Sitting Crane!"

Dan also stopped paddling, his eyes fixed on the long headland.

"Good Lord, Harry, I think you've found it. As sure as you live, there's the long bill, the head and the breast of the crane."

With their spirits suddenly revived, the lads made their craft fairly fly from one small reef to another. At the end of an hour Harry gave a yell and almost jumped out of the boat.

"Dan, here it is, here it is; the silver, the white silver right below our canoe! We've found it, we've found it!" and the canoe stopped on the rock of Silver Island, for which the boys had searched more than eight months.

CHAPTER XXVII

A VISIT TO AMIGOOSHEB. THE END OF LE NOIR. HOME

DAN at first could hardly believe that he was not dreaming. Only this morning he had been almost ready to give up in despair.

But when his eyes saw and his fingers felt the lumps and seams of shining silver in the white calcite vein, he was convinced.

"Thank God!" he cried, as he embraced his brother. "Harry, we've found it! Father and Mother will be happy and we'll start for home to-morrow!"

Recovered from their first joy of discovery, the boys began to explore the small rock in detail.

"It certainly looks," commented Dan, as he stepped off the length and width of it,

"like an egg under the breast of a 'Sitting Crane,' the high rocky headland of Thunder Cape.

"Why, it isn't more than seventy-five feet long and sixty wide, and I don't think it's ten feet high. I'm sure in a storm the waves roll over it in great shape."

From a vein of white rock near the west end of the island under four feet of water, the boys, using a pole of driftwood and the head of their ax, broke a number of lumps of rock and silver which they intended to take home as samples from their mine.

As camping on the bare rock was impossible, they made their camp on Burnt Island, a low well-wooded island between Silver Island and the main shore. For a long time they sat at their evening camp-fire of green birch logs, and talked about home and about the many adventures they had met on their long trip.

"I wonder if Le Noir is watching us to-night?" asked Harry.

"No, he isn't," answered Dan, "because

since this morning he couldn't walk to any place from where he can see us."

"Do you suppose he will build another canoe and try to spy on us again?"

"I don't care what he does now," Dan laughed; "we've at last beaten him at his own game."

After they had been talking for some time they raked a piece of ore out of the fire and Harry crushed it vigorously with Dan's ax. He hammered out a piece of silver and held it up to Dan, saying: "We surely found the silver and it's in the same kind of rock we burnt and crushed at Wolf Hollow a few evenings before we started on this trip."

In the morning they visited Silver Island again to make sure that it was still there, because both had a feeling that the adventure of yesterday had been a dream and that by some witchcraft the Island might have sunken into the depth of Lake Superior overnight.

Having convinced themselves that no magic had sunk their mine, they headed their canoe southwestward down the coast.

"This is different," remarked Dan as they skipped in high spirits over the clear blue water; "this is different from feeling your way in a beastly fog."

The weather continued fine all day, and, with a gentle northeast breeze favoring them, they made a record run of forty miles and camped in the evening near the mouth of the Pigeon River.

Two days later they reached the camp of Amigoosheb, who himself and his whole family did not conceal their joy at seeing their white friends again.

There were great stories to tell around the tepee fire. Dan thanked his friend for sending them the smoke signals and told him how without his warning they would almost surely have fallen into the power of Le Noir. To these stories Amigoosheb and Magwah listened with a peculiar gleam in their eyes, but Amigoosheb only replied:

"Le Noir was a bad man. He was a bad white man and a bad Chippewa grown together.

"We spoke of you many, many times," he continued. "When the clouds dropped the blankets of snow on the forest and when the trees split with the great cold we wished that Manitou would send you plenty of game and that the glowing birch logs would keep you warm.

"Now your father and mother and the little sister will be glad, and I do not go to make another rising smoke on the high rocks of Tabahta."

The boys consented to stay one day with their Chippewa friends, and after a good night's sleep and breakfast their host invited them to follow him into the woods north.

About a mile they walked in silence; Amigoosheb, Magwah and the two boys, but they followed no trail. Then Amigoosheb sat down on a fallen tree and motioned the others to sit down also.

"I wish to speak to my two white friends," Amigoosheb began, and Dan again noticed the mysterious gleam in his eyes.

"From the Island of Tabahta I sent you a message which you read on the Island of Minong. Le Noir was a bad man and the two smokes said that he had followed you.

"Two sleeps ago Le Noir came to my tepee and I read in his face that he had intended to do evil to you, but I could not read that the Great Manitou had not allowed it.

"He said he had lost his gun and his ax, but I did not believe it and when I left the tepee with him I put a knife under my blanket.

"When we were alone near the trout stream his evil spirit came out of him. He called on the white's man God to bring evil upon you and upon me and my family if I would not tell him all I knew about the Island of Shenoah. I remained silent and he sprang upon me like a mad wolf. We fought. He thought I had no knife. He cut my left arm, where Anego has bandaged it, but he did not strike for my arm. I drove my knife deep into his side and his black soul flew away.

"Magwah and I buried his body there,"—

and he bent apart some willows with his long arms and pointed to a low and long pile of flat stones.

"Never will he follow your trail again and may the shaggy bears and the hungry wolves scatter his bones through the forests!"

On their way to Fort Frances the lads traveled as if on wings; in fact, they rigged up a sail on their canoe to increase its speed. Several days of rainy and stormy weather overtook them, but they pushed on in spite of rain and storm.

The birds of June were singing again and the flowers of spring were again in bloom, but they did not listen to the birds nor look at the flowers.

On the seventh evening after leaving Amigoosheb they threw their packs on the stanchion floor of their mother's cabin. Had an angel of God rescued her sons from the bottom of the cold inland sea, the joy of their mother could not have been greater. Both mother and father seemed to have forgotten that the lads had gone to discover a silver

mine. Their sons, for whom they had wept and grieved as dead, were alive and home again. All the rest did not matter.

Little Margaret ran from Dan to Harry and from Harry back to Dan, and Waggles danced and whined around the room as if he were performing in a ballet.

After the boys had enjoyed a week's rest, Dan and his father made a quick trip to Silver Island. After a thorough inspection they found that the apparently rich mine could not be worked without a great outlay of money. The whole vein was submerged, and the islet was so small and low that no mine could be developed without the building of expensive cribs and coffer-dams to protect the pit or shaft from the storm-driven waves.

After the legal requirements had been complied with, they sold their title to the mine for a good figure, and with the money they established themselves in business in Detroit, where ultimately their firm grew to be one of the largest and most prosperous in the city.

When Harry was old enough he also became a member of the firm and added to its success. For the two brothers had found on their long search for Silver Island something which in after life proved far more valuable to them than silver,—undaunted courage and unflagging perseverance, and they had learned to pull together against all odds. "All for one and one for all," became the silent but all-inspiring motto of the house.

Every spring with the first boat the house of McCulloch and Sons shipped a package to Amigoosheb and Anego on Pigeon River, and the Chippewa and his wife were not a little proud of the fine blankets it contained. Once Amigoosheb came down to Detroit on the big smoking and screaming canoe of the White Man. Dan and Harry entertained him as only two grateful youths know how to do; but at the end of a week the old hunter was homesick for the forest. As the boat was ready to leave, the boys presented their friend with the best rifle they had been able to buy in Detroit, and the eyes of the old hunter

gleamed with a boyish joy as his hands tried the mechanism of the gun; and of all the happy people on the boat, the tall, silent Chippewa hunter was the happiest.

When some ten years later the boys and their parents watched the logs blazing in the fireplace on Christmas eve, the boys, as they had often done before, recounted many of the adventures of their winter camp on Isle Royale and they had heard without envy of the great wealth which a Michigan mining company was taking out of Silver Island.

Then the boys' mother arose quietly and said in her low sweet voice: "Come now, boys. You can tell us more of your Christmas rabbits at Camp Siskiwit, while you are enjoying your sister's Christmas turkey. Come right away; you know Margaret does not like to wait."

CHAPTER XXVIII

THE HISTORY OF SILVER ISLAND

THE glamour of romance in fiction is eclipsed by the actual facts of the history of Silver Island, and in this closing chapter of our tale, we shall hold ourselves to recorded history.

On the first of September, 1870, Captain William B. Frue of Houghton, Michigan, landed on Silver Island with a force of thirty-four men and the necessary tools and machinery.

The silver-bearing vein, where it crossed the Island, was under four feet of water and the shaft, of course, had to be sunk on this vein.

The men first built a breakwater nearly six hundred feet long to protect the islet against the two-hundred-mile sweep of the waves from the southeast. Behind this breakwater

which was built of timber and stone and was thirteen feet high, they built a coffer-dam seventy feet in circumference, and entirely enclosing the vein. This enclosed pond they pumped dry by means of a steam siphon and now they were ready for actual mining operations.

This enormous amount of preparatory work the men had accomplished in about six weeks by working eighteen hours a day.

Mining went on now until the latter part of October, when a storm tore away a third of the breakwater, rolled the waves right into the pit and filled it with rock. Although repairing these damages required weeks of time, the men took $108,000 worth of silver out of the mine that fall and the owners were satisfied that they had not paid too much for the Island.

Mining on the islet was, however, by no means picking up riches without work. It was a relentless battle of human brain and muscle against the storms and battering waves of Lake Superior.

Again and again the breakwater and the coffer-dam were battered down by the waves, and rock and timbers carried away as if they were straws and nutshells. But no waves could batter down the courage of Captain Frue and his men. They quarried rock on the mainland and brought timber from a grove of pines some miles inland, because the timber near the mine had been exhausted. With this material they built cribbing with a base of seventy-five feet, and the breakwater rose to a height of eighteen feet above the lake.

When the men had completed their plans, Silver Island looked very different from the thousands of other low rocky islets in Lake Superior.

A high wooden rampart, the interior filled with stone, several houses, an engine house and a shaft house resembling a high tower, gave it the appearance of a sea fortress. And it proved indeed a fortress which waves and ice and storms bombarded in vain. In-

side the ramparts and down in the pit, brave and hardy men carried on their work.

A harbor was built between Burnt Island and the shore. Quite a mining village sprang up on shore, having both a schoolhouse and a church. When the mine was most prosperous, over two hundred men were employed at the same time. Large lake steamers called at the port and tourists landed to see the wonders of Silver Island.

The valuable ore and native silver was found in a fissure vein six feet wide. The ore was fabulously rich, running as high as $12,000 a ton, and lumps of metallic silver were found weighing a hundred pounds.

At the depth of six hundred feet, the vein gave out, and in 1884, when the shaft had reached 1000 feet below the lake, the mine and the island were abandoned.

The romantic life of the Silver Island mine extended only through thirteen years, but during this short time $3,089,000 in silver was taken out.

To-day Silver Island is once more the home of the white screaming gulls and the resting-place of eagles and ospreys. No human being except curious visitors and tourists is ever seen on its ramparts and no smoke issues from the engine house. Many a tourist on the steamers running from Port Arthur to the fiords and fishing stations of Isle Royale, still wild and beautiful, has wondered and asked, as the boat passed the bold and beak-like headland of Thunder Cape, what might be the story of the deserted sea fortress of Silver Island.

THE END

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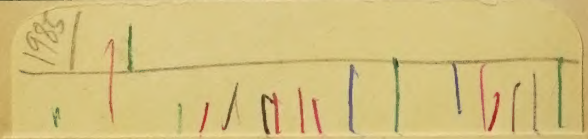

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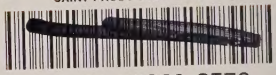

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